アデカン
艶漢
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WINGS COMICS
ISBN978-4-403-61917-5
C0979 ¥530E
新書館◆定価：本体530円＋税
9784403619175
1920979005303
ELEGANT MEN
ADEKAN
尚月地
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尚月地
Tsuki MAO
新書館
Laid-back and somewhat absent-mindedly seductive ex-gaijin-ex-girlfriend-man Shiro (sans loincloth) and hot-blooded officer Kojiro, who stands against all things undisciplined, get involved in a bloody and erotic thrill-ride in an all-hallow town. This action packed jack-of-all-trades will have you swooning at its sexiness and leave you more addicted than opium! Tsukki Nao's very first collection of works!

アデカン幽淫

尚月地
Tsuki TATO

1

CONTENTS

Chapter 1:
Hanayomebashi (Bride's Bridge)

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Omake manga
Afterword

Characters

PEOPLE IN "ADEKAN"

Yoshiwara Amri
—a mysterious assassin who attacks Shiro

Aragami Saburouta

Yamada Aguri

Saotome Mizuhiko

&

Sergeant Sakikawa Ruirimaru

Yoshiwara Shiro
—a sloppy umbrella craftsman who can't seem to keep his loincloth on properly

Yamada Kajiro
—hot-blooded man who can't stand sloppy people

This comic was originally titled "Kouhan Shigotoki Tsuyafubuki" (Of Good Men And Their Jobs - A Storm of Elegance) when it ran in Shousetsu Wings magazine. Though it has been renamed "Adekan", we hope that you will enjoy it just as much.

NAKAMA UNLOCKED PRESENTS

ADEKAN

[ELEGANT MEN]

credits

Scanner - aripie
translator - rayquo
editor - aripie
qcers - abscondite

release date:
04/04/10

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尚月地のコミックス

艶漢アデカン 1

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艶漢 アデカン ①

初版発行——2008年 10月10日
第4刷——2009年 3月25日

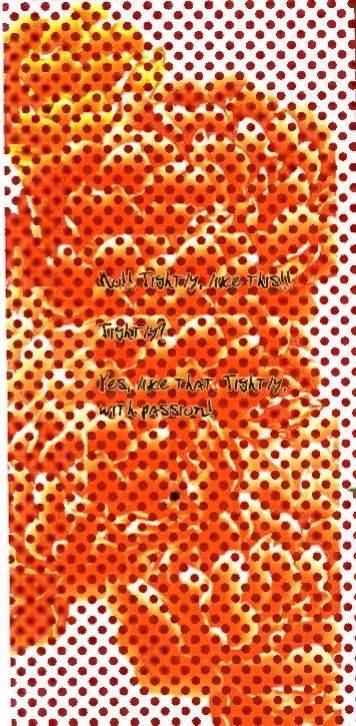
著者——尚月地（なおつき）

発行所——株式会社新書館
〒113-0024 東京都文京区西片 2-19-18
Tel03-3811-2631
〔営業〕〒174-0043 東京都板橋区坂下 1-22-14
Tel03-5970-3840 Fax03-5970-3847
〔URL〕http://www.shinshokan.co.jp/

印刷——図書印刷株式会社

定価——本体530円＋税

©2008, Tsukiji NAO
ISBN978-4-403-61917-5 Printed in Japan



FASCINATING, ELEGANT MEN

アデカン

曲芸弓道

尚月地

Naoki TSUKI

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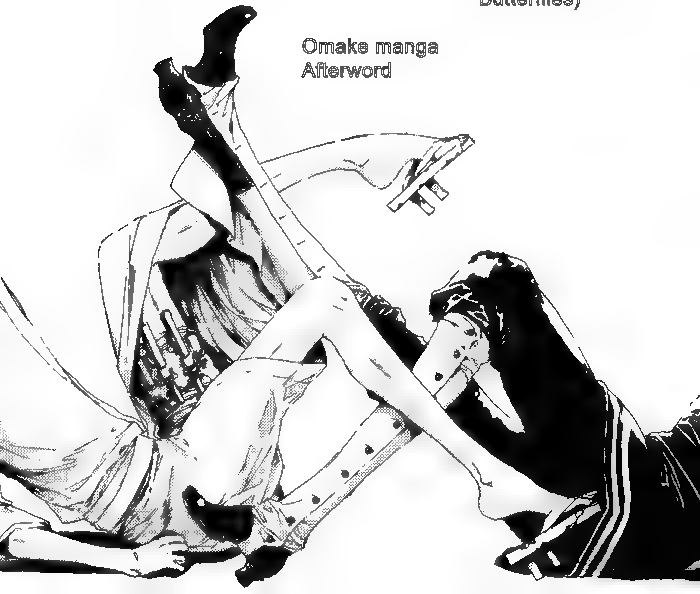

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the
first
story ~
bride's
bridge

HEY HAVE YOU HEARD?
ABOUT THE BRIDE'S BRIDGE?
YOU MEAN THE ONE THAT THEY CROSS WHEN THEY GET MARRIED?
YEAH I HEARD THAT RECENTLY A MADWOMAN CROSSES THERE.
WEARING A BLOODIED BRIDE'S DRESS
HEY!
THAT !
!!
THERE SHE IS!!
Peace among the people brings peace to the nation.
Out
Sh
THIS IS THE MOST BASIC CONCEPT.

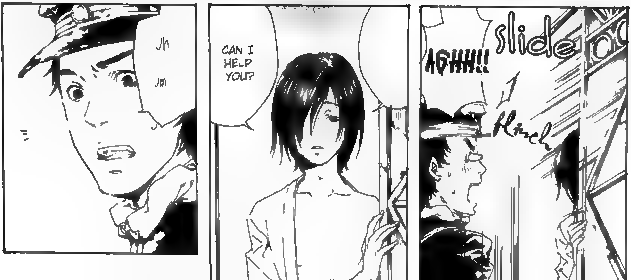
Ma'am, how much longer can I keep your corset?
ONE HOUR
No way!!
Through my shoulders I feel like they're going to pop!
inch
teeter teeter
Therefore, this is the most basic of basic deeds!
Yes, Brother!
inch
Yes, Brother!
clench
What the hell are you doing?!
Ugh
Heehee what broad shoulders you have
What did you say? Broth Shower?
Aren't you doing a little too much shopping?! What were you going to do if I didn't come by to help?
COME WITH ME.
I'll have someone else handle that woman.
!
These streets aren't safe!
The madwoman incidents at Bride's Bridge. The incidents with the Hanasaki Gang!
I told you to interview the witnesses!
S-sergeant!

UGH!
SIGNS OF SCRAPING IN THE EYES AND NOSTRILS, DECAPITATION OF HANDS AND FEET
AROUND THESE PARTS, ONLY THEY WOULD BE VIOLENT ENOUGH TO DO THIS.
BODIES OF TWO WOMEN DISCOVERED ON A RIVER BANK
THESE JUST CAME IN.
POLICE DEPARTMENT
ALL ARTICLES CONTAINING GOLD WERE STOLEN.
Again!?
JUDGING FROM THE WAY THEY DIED IT'S THE HANABUKI GANG WITHOUT A DOUBT
BUT. I WANT TO HELP!
Agui! I have to go do interments now. You stay behind
THERE'S A RUMOUR THAT SOMEONE'S SEEN THEM DOWN IN THE MERCHANTS' ALLEY
WE'VE GOTTEN A TIP

IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE BEEN TO THESE PARTS
HM?
Okay
JUST THIS ONCE!
STRETCH
A SUSPICIOUS SHOP IF I EVER SAW ONE
LET'S START HERE
SOMEWHERE'S UMBRELLA SHOP
Excuse me!
I'm an officer and I'm conducting-

Oh.
...

A-A-A-
Nothing!! It's just, you know, the birds and the bees, doing their little dance...
Huh? Oh well, that sounds cool!
Wh-What was inside!?
Slam


Hm
Hm
CAN I HELP YOU?
AGHH!!
Slide
Rawl

WHAT THE hell ARE YOU letting dangle in front of my SISTER!?
18+
SO
THIS IS MY YOUNGER SISTER AGURI.
I'M OFFICER YAMADA KOJIRO.

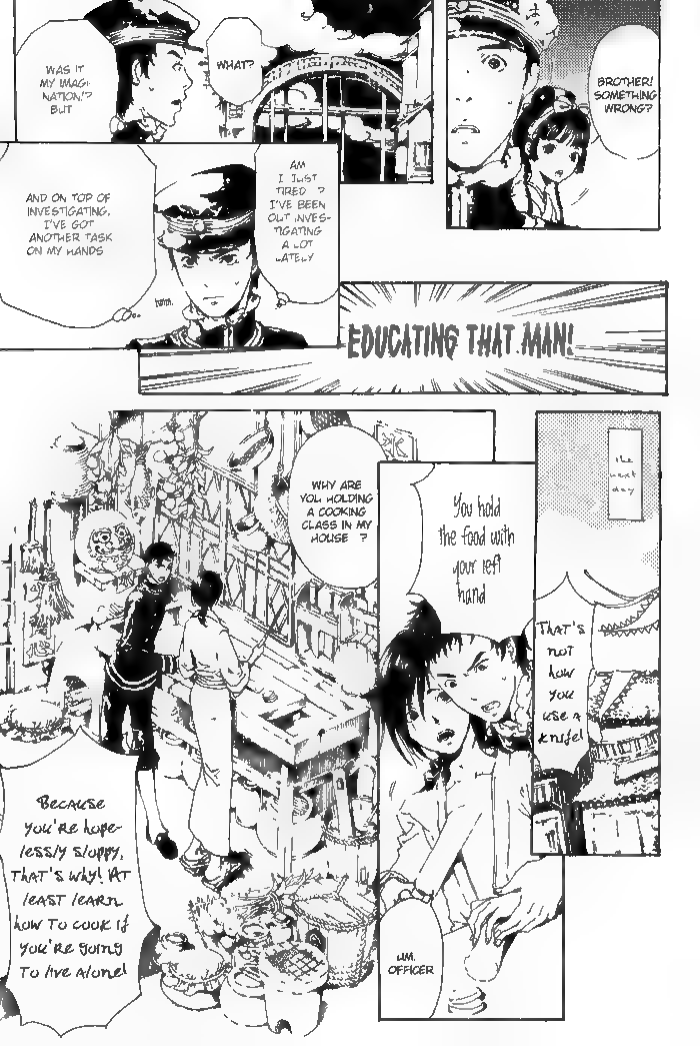
NEIGH-BOUR?
'KAY I'M YOSHIWARA SHIRO, AND THIS IS MY UMBRELLA SHOP I MOVED HERE TWO YEARS AGO
SO THAT UNNATURALLY LARGE BABY OVER THERE IS NOT BOTH OF YOURS?
IT'S NOT
THIS IS MY NEIGHBOUR AKIZUKI MITSU.
I CAN'T LEAVE HIM LIKE THIS!
HE WON'T DO ANYTHING BY HIMSELF JUST LAZES ALL DAY
IF YOU LEAVE THIS MAN ALONE HE'LL STAY NAKED ALL DAY
CLOTHES?
HUH?
OH NO, OFFICER, WE'RE NOT LIKE THAT
I SEE AND THE BABY?
WHAT A USELESS GUY
I COME BY FROM TIME TO TIME TO HELP OUT
rub
rub
JUST NOW I WAS ONLY TRYING TO PUT SOME CLOTHES ON SHIRO WHILE HE WAS SLEEPING

MITSU-SAN BROUGHT THE BABY OVER
IT'S AN 'ABANDONED CHILD'
PEOPLE WILL ATTACH A SUM OF MONEY TO AN UNWANTED BABY
AND PUT IT IN SOMEONE ELSE'S CARE.
'ABANDONED CHILD' THERE ARE A LOT LATELY
IT MAY BE BECAUSE IT IS GETTING HARDER FOR CITIZENS TO GET BY BUT IT IS A GRIM STORY, NEVERTHELESS
I SAW MITSU-SAN WITH THE BABY ONE DAY
EAH
MITSU-SAN WHERE DID THE BABY COME FROM ?
A...a at a first glance
I TOOK HER IN JUST COULDN'T LEAVE HER THERE.
AHH AGAIN?
tremble tremble
GULP
tremble tremble

SHIRO, STOP THAT, I'M NOT OW!
MITSU-SAN IS A NICE LADY SHE'S ALREADY TAKEN IN FIVE CHILDREN.
I SEE IT MUST BE HOW PEOPLE CAN'T RESIST STARING AT TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS
GLOW
SOMETHING ABOUT HER ATTRACTED ME SO I DECIDED TO KEEP IT
IT'S NOTHING MY HEADACHES HAVE JUST BEEN GETTING WORSE.
WHAT'S WRONG?
AND DO MANY OTHER THINGS
OH, YOU MEAN THE GROUP WHO STEAL AND SLAUGHTER.
WE GOT A TIP THAT THE HANABUKI GANG WAS SEEN AROUND THIS AREA.
DO YOU KNOW ANY-THING?
OH, RIGHT
SO HOW CAN WE HELP YOU, OFFICER?

I'M AFRAID I CAN'T HELP YOU.
AH.
YES. THEY'RE A VIOLENT CRIME RING WITH HANABUKI SAKICHI AT THEIR HEAD.
'KAY UNDER-STOOD
STAND
IS THAT SO.. IF YOU FIND OUT ANYTHING NEW, PLEASE CON-TACT US.
Despite her lack of wealth,
She does so much for other people.
OH, SHIRO! THERE'S A TEAR IN YOUR KIMONO AGAIN!
OH?
EXCUSE ME
SHE HAS A GOOD HEART
YOU'RE LIKE A CHILD
BUT

ON THE OTHER HAND, WHAT A SLOPPY MAN!
I DON'T THINK MITSU-SAN MINDS TAKING CARE OF HIM.
THAT'S NOT THE POINT! ONCE A MAN BEGINS TO LOSE HIS COMPOSURE, IT'S.
!!!
IS THAT
THE RUMOURED MADWOMAN!?
SHE'S HOLDING SOMETHING
A BABY!?


WAS IT MY MAGI-NATION,? BUT
WHAT?
BROTHER! SOMETHING WRONG?
AND ON TOP OF INVESTIGATING, I'VE GOT ANOTHER TASK ON MY HANDS
hmm.
AM I JUST TIRED ? I'VE BEEN OUT INVESTIGATING A LOT LATELY
EDUCATING THAT MAN!
WHY ARE YOU HOLDING A COOKING CLASS IN MY HOUSE ?
You hold the food with your left hand
I'll work hard
THAT'S NOT HOW YOU USE A KNIFE!
Because you're hopelessly sloppy, THAT'S WHY AT LEAST LEARN HOW TO COOK IF YOU'RE GOING TO LIVE ALONE!
UM. OFFICER

THUNK THUNK THUNK THUNK THUNK
Wil- power!?
Cooking is all about will power!
SNAP
Give it to me!
I'll show you how!
'KAY
Hunk
Hey! Stop that!
SNIFF SNIFF
IT SMELLS VERY GOOD
Wow! What a nice smell
tadaa!
Here it is!
Use your chop-sticks!
I DON'T LIKE TO USE CHOP-STICKS
lean
WHAT!?

munch
HERE
FINE, THEN. ONLY ONE BITE
smile
DELICIOUS.
TALK ABOUT HIGH-MAINTENANCE
chew chew
IT'S...
It's hanging out again!
rub rub
Here! Put it on! Put it on, now!
AHH!
WHOOSH
clothes
Here!
I-IN THE DRAWER OVER TH
I DON'T LIKE TO WEAR-
SHUT UP! WHERE ARE YOUR UNDERCLOTHES!?

I'll show you how!
BRO-THER!
Put it on properly! I hate how it's peeking out like that!
18+
...
...
Huh?
Huh! Tightly, like this!!
So this is where
Tightly?
Yes, like that tightly, with passion!
H-No, Aguri! This isn't what you think! It's not some sort of loincloth foreplay by a loincloth fetishist!
NOooo

...
HAHAHA!
HUH?
hahaha
Hahaha! You two are so funny!
PFF!
SHIRO-KUN.
YOU LOOK BETTER WHEN YOU SMILE
MUCH BETTER THAN YESTERDAY
HUH?
OF COURSE I CAN'T TRUST YOU TO MANAGE BY YOURSELF
Y YOU'RE COMING TOMORROW AS WELL?
Huh!?
shrug
All right, that's all for today! Tomorrow I'll come back to teach you how to cook rice!

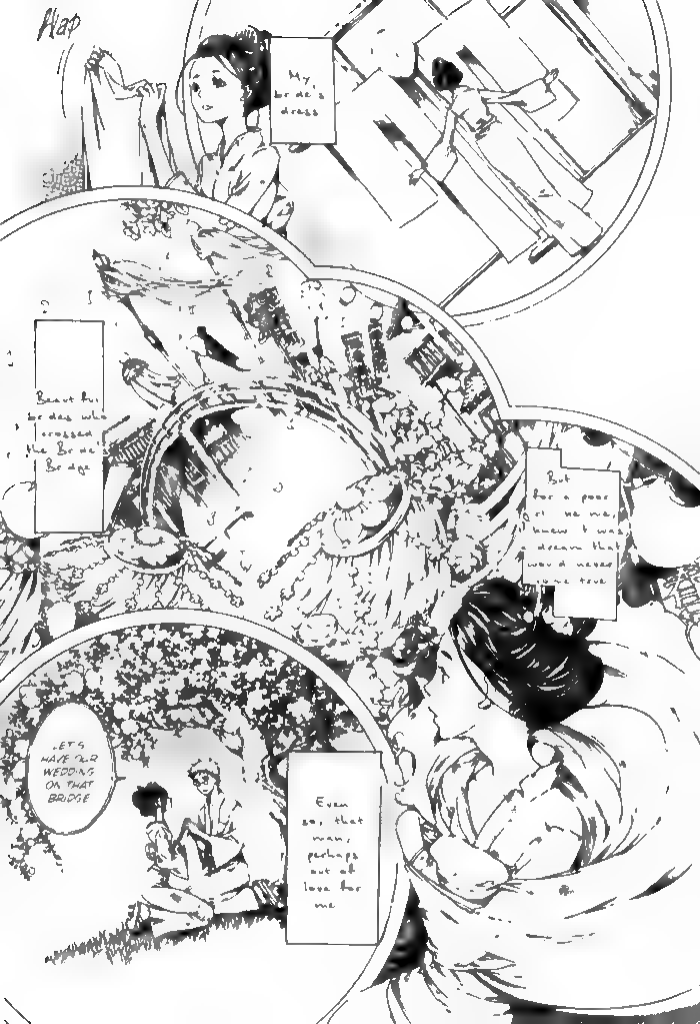
YOU DON'T SEE THESE KINDS OF PEOPLE LATELY
clang clang
BAM!
See you.
I GUESS I SHOULD DO SOME BUSINESS FOR ONCE
SLIDE
MITSU-SAN!
GOING OUT TO DO BUSINESS, SHIRO? HOW RARE

DON'T WORRY, YOU CAN KEEP IT HERE
NO, I THINK IT'S TIME
DON'T WANT IT CAUSING TROUBLE
I THOUGHT I MIGHT PICK UP THAT BABY I LEFT WITH YOU.
'EAH. WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE, MITSU-SAN?
I'LL DO IT.
NO,
hahaha
BESIDES, THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN TAKE CARE OF A BABY.
ME KILLING THE BABY
YOU SAW, DIDN'T YOU?

I FELT A PRESENCE WHILE BURYING THE BABY I KILLED LAST TIME
YOU WERE THAT PERSON, WEREN'T YOU?
THEN WHAT YOU DID WOULD MAKE SENSE
SUDDENLY TAKING IN MY NEW CHILD
SO YOU WOULD KILL THE BABY AND TAKE THE MONEY THAT CAME WITH THEM?
YEAH
YOU KILLED THE FOUR BEFORE THIS ONE TOO?
NO, NOT JUST FOUR.
THIRTY-FOUR.

WHY ISN'T THAT JUST
HAHA.
RIGHT!
MITSU, GO HOME I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE REST
click
THANKS A LOT
RUN
RUN
RUN
I'M FROM THE HANABUKI GANG
AND YOU ARE?

WE'RE FINALLY
GET IN BETWEEN US!
I'M NOT GOING TO LET HIM.
dash
GOING TO BE TOGETHER!
yes
Two years ago, when I first met Shunkichi-san
these flowers were blooming
clunk
I can almost wear it
I finally have enough money.
It's been two years since then


Flap
My brides dress
Because her dress was crossed like Bride
But for a poor girl like me, I knew it was a dream that was never true
LET'S HAVE OUR WEDDING ON THAT BRIDGE
Even so, that was perhaps but all love for me

WHAT!?
OF COURSE I PLAN TO SEVER MY TIES WITH THEM.
I'M ACTUALLY A MEMBER OF THE HANABUKI GANG
But
MITSU, I HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU.
It felt like a dream
I NEED A SUM OF MONEY
BUT TO GET OUT OF THE GANG
JUST BEING IN THIS GANG TERRIFIES ME.
A HORRIBLE IDEA CROSSED MY MIND
There are middlemen who arrange for babies to be taken in
Tokyo's black markets.
There, I would accept the baby as and there money

That man prepared this dress especially for me.
Then I would kill the bride and take the money
I did this over and over again
At first I thought I would go insane with the guilt
But for my happiness, I endured it
The day will almost come when I wear this on that bridge
I can't turn back now
SPEAKING OF WHICH, THAT MADWOMAN ON THE BRIDE'S BRIDGE
I WONDER WHO'S DOING IT
A bloodied bride.
HAHA
Almost there

!!!?
AGHH!
AGHH!
AHH!
AGHH!
AHH!
HUHP
PING...
DASH
NO!!
AN ILLUSION...?
pant
pant
pant
AND THAT HEADACHE AGAIN.
bang
What's wrong with me? I'm seeing a lot of these illusions lately

what now? My dress!
!!!
Blood!
C-CALM DOWN.
THIS IS AN ILLUSION. CALM DOWN. AN ILLUSION.
pant
pant
pant
What's an illusion and what isn't? What's wrong with me? What's all this blood?
Huh?
It isn't an illusion?
real blood?
slip

Am I mad?
TWITCH
Huh?
Really? But come to think of it..
Maybe
I...me?
TWITCH
Don't tell me
The mad woman on the Bridge's Bridge.
How
How can I
!!
MITSU!!
Shoukichi-san, why haven't you gotten rid of mun!?
HEY
RISE
Shoukichi san!
Shoukichi-san!
BAM

BAG
ALONG WITH YOU
I'LL GET RID OF HIM HERE
I CAN'T JUST LET LOOSE IN THE STREET LIKE THAT
RIP
!!
float
!!

thud
CAUSING ALL THAT MADWOMAN RUCKUS
I CAN'T HAVE PEOPLE TRACING YOU BACK TO ME
swarm
swarm
...!!
YOU WERE BETTER MONEY THAN I THOUGHT
I NEVER THOUGHT YOU'D GO SO FAR FOR SOME WEDDING DRESS I STOLE
YOU'RE RIGHT
I'M HANABUKI SAKICHI.

!!
YOU KNOW, VILLAINS DON'T NEED PHYSICAL STRENGTH
HM? SURPRISED THAT I TURNED OUT TO BE SOME SKINNY GUY?
THEY NEED WIT AND CUNNING AS LONG AS YOU HAVE THAT, YOU'RE SET.
I THINK I'LL START WITH SHAVING OFF YOUR NOSE
YOU HAVE A NICE FACE, THAT'S GOOD! MORE FUN FOR ME
AND NOW FOR YOU.
Jauk
WHAT'S UP WITH HIM?
HIS EYES.

I HEARD A GUNSHOT AND I THOUGHT I'D LOOK INTO IT
O-Officer.
!?
Let go of Shiro-kun!
I'M GLAD I ARRIVED BEFORE THINGS TURNED SERIOUS
I WAS ACTUALLY WANDERING AFTER BEING SEPARATED FROM AGURI BUT
RUSH!
KILL HIM.
Hol Run away!

Off-icer!!
!!
SWARM
SWARM
SWARM
Run away!!
DRAW
THUNK THUNK THUNK
!!
SWING
SWOOSH
AH!
COUGH
NNNGH AGHHH!!
gurble

SLASH
SLASH
AH!
AH!
SLASH
ARGH!
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
AH!
NGH!
MFH!
AH
STRONGER THAN I THOUGHT
BUT THERE ARE TOO MANY
HE'LL DIE IN A MATTER OF TIME
Officer! I'm fine!
So please get away!

AGH!
SLASH
NO!!!
THUD
No!
This person
HE SHOULD KNOW HE'S GOING TO DIE SOON.
HAHA, WHAT A WASTE OF EFFORT
SWEEP
OH...
to carry out his beliefs
Is the type to put his life on the line
Men
These types of people
I didn't know they st existed
this

OH!
HUH?
THIS IS INTERESTING!!
INTERESTING
Whoa...
Eek!!
DRAG
Huhh!?
I DIDN'T WANT THE OFFICER TO SEE ME LIKE THIS, BUT
dash
I HAVE NO CHOICE
TAP TAP TAP TAP
clack

UP TOP!
WH..WHAT IS THAT?
!?
JUMP
WHISTLE
AGHHH!
AGHHH!
Swing
NGH!
NGH!
NGH!

DRAW
YOU LITTLE
RUSH
RUSH
SI... SHIRO KUN!
TAP
!?
TAP
AGHH
AH!
SLASH
SLASH
SLASH
SLASH
SLASH
HUH?
I'M NOT TAKING ANY OF THIS. I GOTTA GET OUTTA. .
tug
HA HA
HE MUST BE A MONSTER.

WHA...!!
Snow-kun-san
I'm not gonna let myself...
KICK
KICK
I made it this far, when I had nothing to START WITH!
STOP IT!
Save you Shouichi-san
STOP IT!
pull
n-Hey, you...
No! No!
No!
STEP
STEP
ACH
AH!
AH!
gasp
SHOCK
ZIG
ZAG
ACHH!

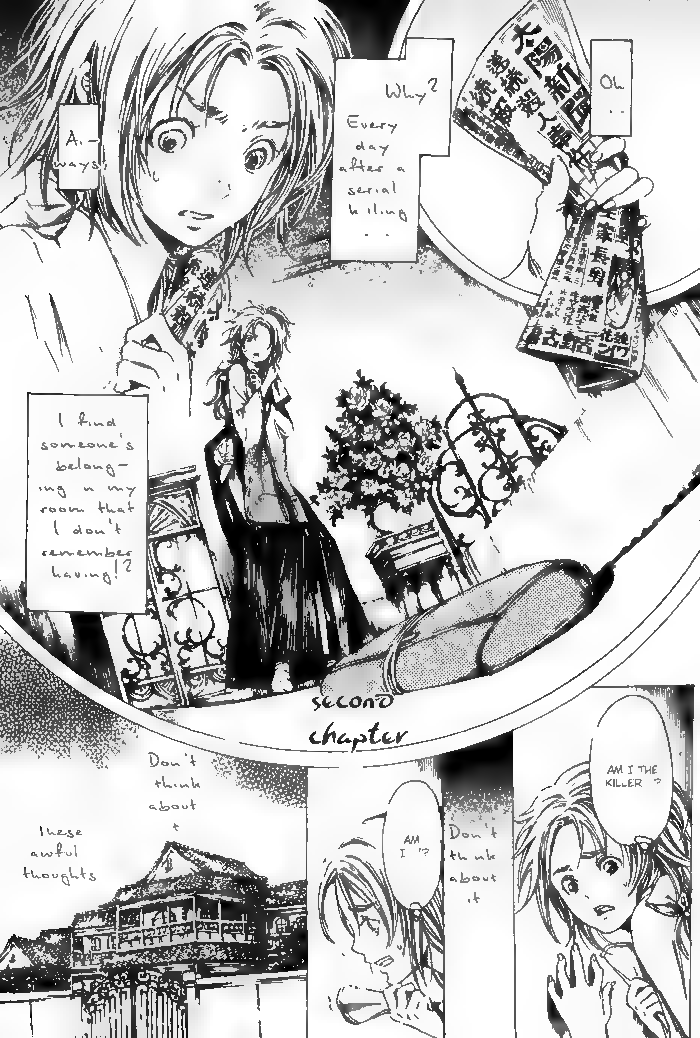
HAHA
HAHA
HAHA

I SEE
SO, OFFICER, AREN'T YOU GOING TO INVESTIGATE ME?
HUH?
THERE'S NO WAY AN EX-WEAPONS USER WOULD BE RUNNING A DECENT BUSINESS.
BUT YOU HAD ABANDONED YOUR SWORD, RIGHT?
HAHA. THAT.
ANY OFFICER WOULD THINK THAT
I COULD BE LYING
ARE YOU GOING TO BELIEVE ME?

I OWE YOU MY LIFE
HUH?
OF COURSE.
HELP ME OUT, SHIRO-KUN!
A kind of person you don't see a lot lately
'KAY
Heh
Reeeiy
SO, NOW TO HAUL THESE GUYS IN!
!
HUH?
NO, THANK YOU.
clench
I THINK IT'S YOUR DESTINY TO become A policeman! USE YOUR SKILLS TO benefit THE public!
SHIRO-KUN!

Sam
Bro-ther! Shiro-sama!
struggle
Don't be shy! Come on!
S-Stop it!!
take off
what!? no!
I KNOW THAT THIS UNIFORM WOULD LOOK GOOD ON YOU TOO! TRY IT ON!!!
...
flinch
...
I BROUGHT SOME FOOD.
JUST PUT THIS on!
YANK
don't want to
If you put it on, it'll put you in the mood!
A-Ah, Akira! This isn't some sort of uniform foreplay by a uniform fetishist!
PFF!
Ahaha! You two are so funny!!
END

SO WHO EXACTLY ARE YOU?
YOUR SKILLS ARE INCREDIBLE
I would never run away leaving someone To die!
SEEMS SO.
I THOUGHT YOU'D LISTEN TO ME AND RUN.
I REALIZED WHAT MITSU-SAN WAS DOING AND WHILE I WAS TRYING TO FIND MORE INFORMATION.
I WAS CAUGHT BY HANABUKI. AND WELL, THE SITUATION BEING WHAT IT WAS.
SOME TIME AGO, I HAD STOPPED TAKING UP THE SWORD, BUT.
A LONG TIME AGO I WAS AN ANKI" USER
SNAP
I JUST FELT CONTEMPT TOWARDS THAT HANABUKI. MAN
I SEE YOUR SENSE OF JUSTICE BID YOU TO
I DECIDED TO TAKE UP MY SWORD AGAIN.
NO
Kaitaro Horita art of making skull weapons on one's person


A... ways
Why? Every day after a serial killing...
Oh...
I find someone's belonging in my room that I don't remember having!?
second chapter
These awful thoughts
Don't think about it
AM I !?
Don't think about it
AM I THE KILLER !?

第二の話

合わせ鏡

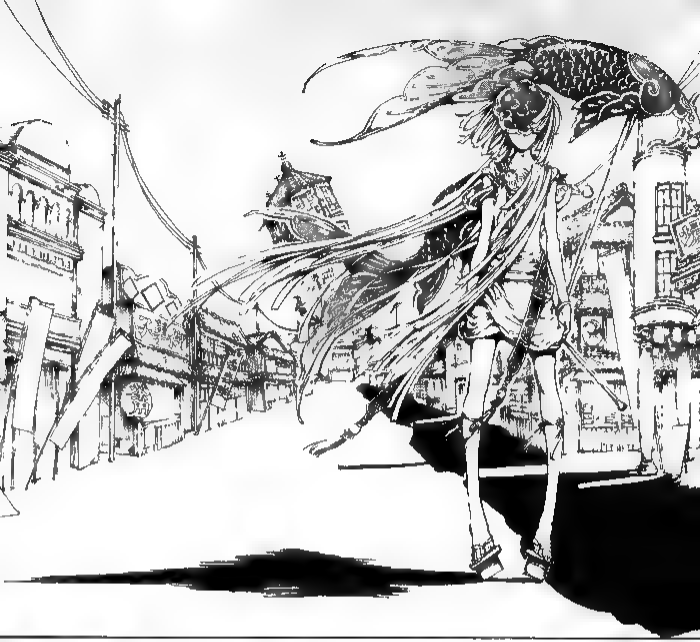
あわせかがみ

the second chapter

awase kagami

(juxtaposed mirrors)

EVEN TODO YOICHI-SAMA WAS KILLED YESTERDAY
STARTLING, ISN'T IT, AYAMEKO?
HOW FRIGHT-ENING
THE GENTLEMEN WHO HAVE BEEN KILLED ARE ALL FROM GOOD FAMILIES.
THIS IS THE SIXTH ONE ALREADY
I almost wish some monster would appear, and tear everything apart...
AND TO THINK I MIGHT BE GUILTY
I HOPE THE KILLER IS CAUGHT SOON.



UMBREL-
LAS

pull
ANYONE?
!?

SWOOSH
!
'ES THIS IS A SEASONAL UMBRELLA, CALLED THE GOLDFISH
UM-BRE-LAS?
THUD
!!
THIS IS
HE'S A MAN!
AYA-MEKO

munch munch
munch
munch
THERE'S STILL MORE. PLEASE TAKE YOUR TIME EATING
'KAY
I WAS SO STARTLED WHEN YOU PASSED OUT FROM HUNGER.
I'M GLAD WE WERE PASSING BY.
'ES THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HELP
I'M THE OLDEST DAUGHTER OF THE MIZUKAMI HOUSE, HASUMIKO. THIS IS MY YOUNGER TWIN SISTER, AYAMEKO
I HOPE YOU'LL ENJOY YOUR TIME HERE
OH, NO NEED

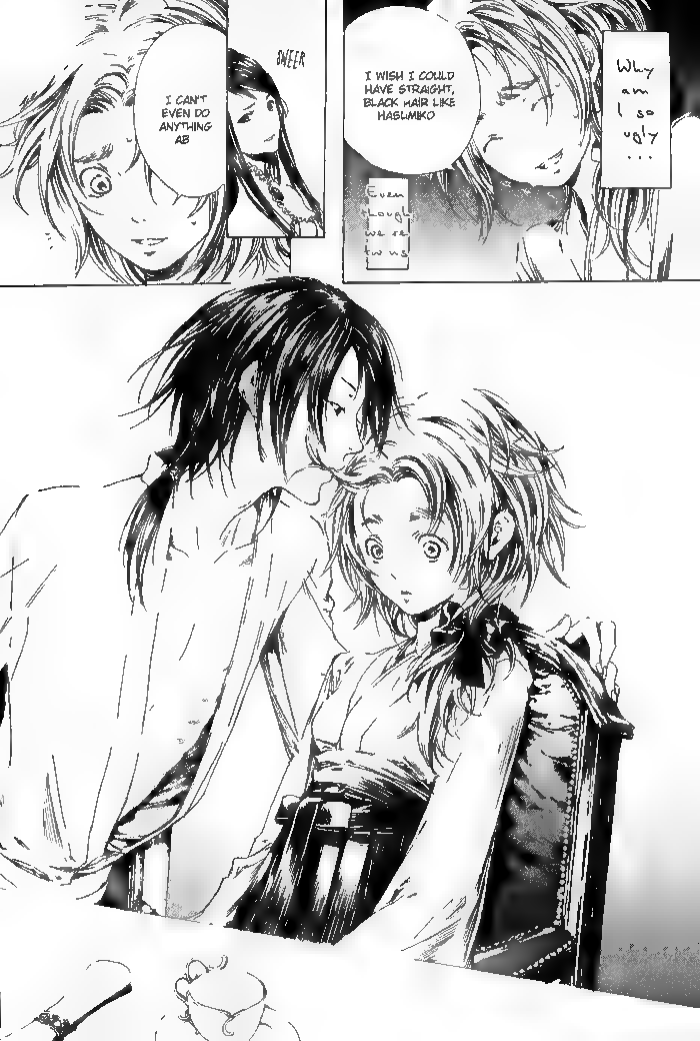
YES. MOST PEOPLE DON'T BELIEVE US, WE LOOK SO DIFFERENT
THERE ARE SOME TWINS WHO LOOK LIKE MIRROR IMAGES OF EACH OTHER
Why
YOU ARE TWINS ?
I AM YOSHI-WARA SHIRO.
am I so ugly?
drip
I SELL UM-BRELLAS IN THE MERCHANT'S ALLEY
CLENCH
sp.11

YOSHI-WARA.
SHIRO-SAMA.
YOSHI-WARA-SAMA.
THUMP
MISSES, THE OFFICER YOU'VE CALLED IS HERE
OH, DO LET HIM IN
SWOOP
HELLO.
I'M OFFICER YAMADA KOJIRO
OH!
OFFICER
DON'T "OH OFFICER." ME, YOU IDIOT!!
SMASH
ECK!

OH, YES. WE'RE FRIENDS
AH, UM, ARE YOU TWO ACQUAINTANCES?
TH THAT HURTS
I GET A CALL SAYING SOMEONE HAS A MAN WHO PASSED OUT OF HUNGER, AND LO AND BEHOLD IT'S YOU AGAIN!
HE SEEMS MORE LIKE A MOTHER
GOOD!
THANK YOU FOR THE MEAL
WHERE'S YOUR THANK YOU FOR THE MEAL!?
Mmm mm!
WIPE
LOOK AT YOU, FOOD ALL OVER YOUR FACE!
I'M SEEING SOMETHING I DON'T WANT TO SEE
SHIRO-KUN.
GEEZ, WITHOUT ME YOU'RE...
WHY DON'T YOU COOK FOR YOURSELF!?

Eeek!
raawwr
DON'T BRAG ABOUT IT, YOU WALKING INDECENCY!
SHARP
I DON'T LIKE UNDERWEAR.
OF COURSE I'M NOT WEARING UNDERWEAR.
cut to black.
MAKITANI MAKES THE MOST WONDERFUL CUP OF TEA.
WE- WELL, WHY DON'T WE HAVE SOME ENGLISH TEA?
..ES..
AVOID OPENING YOUR LEGS AT ALL COSTS WHILE SITTING DOWN, UNDERSTOOD!?
IT IT'S MY HOBBY CERAMICS.
OH, THAT'S SOMETHING AYAMEKO MADE
THIS IS AN INTERESTING SHAPE FOR A CUP

AH YOU HAVE A KILN IN YOUR HOUSE?
OH, YES. IT'S PART OF OUR FATHER'S WORK, SO WE HAVE A PROFESSIONAL ONE
IT'S VERY NICE
YOU HAVE EXCE...ENT TASTE.
grin
OH!
Th.. thank you...!
MUSK
YOU HAVE STRANGE COLOURED HAIR, DON'T YOU, AYAMEKO-SAN?
IT'S BROWN AND CURLY.
I MY HAIR IS SO LIGHT, AND UNRULY
ALMOST LIKE WROUGHT CANDY YOU SEE ON THE MAINLAND
OH
Why...


I CAN'T EVEN DO ANYTHING AB
SWEEP
I WISH I COULD HAVE STRAIGHT, BLACK HAIR LIKE HASUMIKO
Why am I so ugly...
Even though we're twins

Ohca!
rip
!!?
grin
NOT SWEET-TASTING AT ALL
spit
AS I THOUGHT

C CALM DOWN! YOU'RE TURNING INTO A GANG-STER!
UH... UM, OFFICER!
I'M FINE!
HUH, KID!?
SHAKE SHAKE
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW RUDE YOU ARE!?
WHAT
NO KIDDING, IDIOT!
GEK
SHOUT
YELL
THANK YOU FOR YOUR HOSPITALITY
WEL. THEN.
HAVE A NICE DAY
THANK YOU FOR STAYING OVER, WE HAD A DE-LIGHTFUL TIME
YOSHI-WARA-SAMA

AYAMEKO, DEAR
DON'T TELL ME YOU'VE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH YOSHIWARA-SAMA?
O-OF COURSE NOT! WE'VE JUST MET!
BAD IDEA, DEAR, BE-CAUSE.
ALL THE GENTLEMEN YOU'VE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH
WASN'T IT TRUE.
MAYBE YOU DID IT UNCONSCIOUSLY OUT OF ANGUISH FOR AN UNREQUITED LOVE?
ALWAYS END UP GETTING KILLED
WITH ALL THE OTHER VICTIMS?
OR AM I THINKING TOO MUCH?

HASUMIKO, STOP THAT IT'S JUST A COINCIDENCE
PER-HAPS
I'LL BE GOING BACK TO MY ROOM.
SLAM
OH NO
SHOULD I THROW THEM AWAY ?
creak
slide
All the gentlemen that got murdered were people I secretly harboured feelings for
And always on the day after a serial killing
I have no idea how. .
.out in my room I always find belongings of people I don't know

What if I was the one mean-ta usly doing it?
Maybe, just maybe.
And these past few months, they've been killed one after another
GASP
That man will be next?
Maybe
It's impos-sible No, I cannot think like these things
What am I thinking
He's a man I just met
If only
If only I was like a mirror mage of Hasumiko, just as beautiful
It will never come true
And besides, I cannot fall in love

Why am I such a worthless girl?
I could be engaged to a beautiful and powerful young man
he left
I'M TELLING YOU THAT'S WHY YOU SHOULD WATCH OUT!
I TOLD YOU NOT TO COME NEAR THIS AREA BECAUSE OF THE SERIAL KILLINGS!
YES, WELL
DON'T 'YES, WELL' ME! MEN LIKE YOU SHOULD BE ESPECIALLY CAREFUL!
ALL THE VICTIMS SO FAR HAVE BEEN HANDSOME MEN FROM GOOD FAMILIES
THAT IS TO SAY?

PROBABLY THE DEEDS OF A PSYCHOPATH.
NOT ONLY THAT, THE BODIES HAVE BEEN GRUESOME SOME HAVE MAD BURN MARKS
THE PERPETRATOR IS ALSO SKILLED, HE HASN'T LEFT ANY EVIDENCE BEHIND
ARRESTING HIM WOULD BE DIFFICULT UNLESS HE WAS CAUGHT IN THE ACT
YOU DON'T SEEM LIKE YOU'RE FROM A GOOD FAMILY, BUT YOU ARE WHAT PEOPLE CALL GOOD-LOOKING
point
YOU SHOULDN'T EITHER, OFFICER.
DON'T COME NEAR THIS PLACE
THEN.

YOU ARE A GOOD MAN
A MUCH BETTER ONE THAN ME
I THINK IT VERY FOOLISH WHEN A 'BEAUTIFUL FACE'
...IS DEFINED AS WHEN THE DISTRIBUTION OF FACIAL MUSCLES AND THE POSITION OF THE EYES AND NOSE.
HAPPEN TO ALIGN THEMSELVES WITH WHAT PEOPLE SEE AS 'BEAUTIFUL' IN THAT GENERATION AND TIME
TWIST
AHEM
I'M SERIOUS.
BUT- TERING ME UP WON'T GET YOU DINNER.

WHAT YOU HAVE, OFFICER, IS VERY GOOD
I'LL...
IS WHAT LIES BENEATH
WHAT SHOULD BE IMPORTANT, RATHER THAN THE DISTRIBUTION OF FACIAL MUSCLES..
ENOUGH TO MAKE ME WANT TO SINK MY TEETH INTO IT
STOP IT!!
ST...
EXPLAIN?
THIS IS WHAT YOU CALLED ME OUT FOR?
..SAY, SHIRO-KUN.
The next day
*Sa + ro = Sadist + ro = S-ro ...*sadist. as in SaM
REALLY!? WHY DON'T I START CALLING YOU S-RO* INSTEAD, HUH!?
...!
STOP TRYING TO BITE EVERY-THING! ARE YOU AN S* OR SOME-THING!?
UBER S, TO SAY THE LEAST

I WANTED YOU TO TRY IT ON, OFFICER
'ES. MY NEWEST UMBRELLA. AND ITS ACCESSORIES
THE MOTIF IS 'WATER AND A FEELING OF RELEASE'
WHAT'S THIS COMING OUT OF MY CROTCH, HUH!? A RISING DRAGON!? WHAT DO YOU PLAN ON MAKING ME RELEASE!?
ARE YOU STUPID!? DO YOU THINK SOMETHING LIKE THIS IS GOING TO SELL, HUH, S-RO!?
CRASH
Feex
P- PLEASE PICK UP THE SHOE MOLD!!
WHAT WAS THAT!?
T- THE MAIN REQUEST OF TODAY IS AFTER THIS!!

SHIRO-KUN.
YOU SELL UMBRELLAS, RIGHT? WHAT'S ALL THIS FOR?
LATELY, I'VE BEEN FEELING INSPIRED TO MAKE A CHANGE
I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE SOME FOOT-DECORATIONS TO GO WITH THE UMBRELLAS.
FOOT ACCES-SORIES?
YOU DON'T NEED THOSE!
splash
UGH.
shiver
Haha-ha! It tickles!
KASHASHASHA
Spare me, Shiro-kun!

FOR ONCE HE'S SERIOUS
OKAY
swipe
swipe
DON'T MOVE, PLEASE
I STILL CAN'T STAND IT!
UGH
twitch
twitch
PINCH
I'LL DISTRACT MYSELF WITH PAIN.
I KNOW
I CAN'T HELP IT
PFFT
bite
bite
PINCH
NOT ENOUGH!

... WHAT WERE YOU DOING?
NOTHING
wheeze
wheeze
twinge
twinge
FINISHED!
THANK YOU.
YOU KNOW, IF THERE WAS A FESTIVAL TO CELEBRATE SENSITIVITY IN THE BACK OF THE FOOT, I'D BE CROWNED KING.
Woooo
KING OF SENSITIVITY
Your high-ness!
Your high-ness!
AND YOU...
MUMBLE MUMBLE
OFFICER
WHISPER WHISPER
REALLY?
'ES.
ALL RIGHT I'LL HEAD BACK TO THE POLICE STATION.
STAND
'LRIGHT THANK YOU.

CLANK
SLAM!
WELL
I GUESS I SHOULD PREPARE TOO
TWIG
HM
NOT BAD FOR SOMETHING I MADE IN A RUSH
slide
YOSHIWARA-SAMA
MASUMIKO-SAN!
GOOD AFTERNOON.
HOW ABOUT A LITTLE CHAT?
CERTAINLY
I KNOW A GOOD PLACE

HOW BEAU-TIFUL!
I DIDN'T KNOW THERE WAS A GARDEN LIKE THIS IN TOWN!
YES
YOSHI-WARA-SAMA.
WHAT SORT OF CHAT?
AND?

KOJIRO!
SOME-ONE'S HERE TO SPEAK TO YOU!
HASU-MIKO-SAN!
OFFICER! PLEASE, HELP ME!
SHIRO-KUN!?
YOSHI-WARA-SAMA HAS BEEN KIDNAPPED!
HE AND I WERE HAVING A LITTLE CHAT IN A GARDEN NEAR THE MERCHANTS' TOWN...
AND SUDDENLY SOMEONE APPEARED BEHIND HIM!
THEY HIT HIM AND TOOK HIM AWAY!

I-I WAS SO FRIGHTENED I JUST RAN AWAY OH... !!
C-CALM DOWN!
IT MUST BE HER!
SHE DID IT!! I KNOW, BECAUSE...
AYA-MEKO
ALL THE VICTIMS HAVE BEEN MEN SHE'S FALLEN IN LOVE WITH!
W-WHY ARE YOU HERE!?
AYA-MEKO...!
SHE CAME HERE TOO, JUST MOMENTS AGO.
HASU-MIKO
AND FOR YOSHIWARA-SAMA TO BE TARGETED, I CAN ONLY THINK

SHE SAYS THESE WERE FOUND IN HER ROOM.
TH-THESE ARE ...?
BELONG-INGS I DON'T REMEMBER PUTTING IN MY ROOM.
I WAS TOO AFRAID TO TELL ANY-ONE BEFORE,
YOU'RE RIGHT, I MIGHT BE THE KILLER.
BUT I
BUT I DECIDED TO GO TO THE POLICE
HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING TO YOSHIWARA-SAMA.
HUH!?
STOP PLAYING DUMB! I PUT ALL OF THESE IN YOUR ROOM AS A PRANK!
S...
S...

WHY!?
YOU PUT ALL THESE IN MY ROOM AS A PRANK...
YOU DID IT, DIDN'T YOU!?
YOU KNOW THESE HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE KILLINGS! WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU "MIGHT BE"!?
!!
I THOUGHT I'D PULL A JOKE ON YOU.
WELL... SINCE THE VICTIMS ALL HAPPENED TO BE MEN YOU ADMIRED
W... HASUMIKO, WAIT!
HASUMIKO, THAT'S HORRIBLE! WHY...
FOR A LONG TIME NOW
IT'S BECAUSE I'VE HATED YOU.
YOU DON'T REALIZE HOW FORTUNATE YOU ACTUALLY ARE.
YOU WERE ALWAYS FEELING SORRY FOR YOURSELF.
JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT THE PRETTIEST,

BECAUSE FATHER THOUGHT HE COULDN'T GET ANYTHING FROM YOU,
ALL OF IT CAME TO ME
WHILE YOU WERE OUT PLAYING WITH YOUR FRIENDS, I WAS ALWAYS INSIDE WITH STUDIES OR LESSONS
AND SOON ENOUGH, I WAS MARRIED TO THAT HORRIBLE MAN.
HORRIBLE!? HE'S SUCH A MAN OF HIGH POWER!
POWER DOESN'T REFLECT PERSONALITY!
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND
...WHAT I WENT THROUGH THE FIRST DAY WE MET!!
I NEVER
SAY IT, AYAMEKO.
AH.
YOU'RE THE KILLER, AREN'T YOU!!?
STOP IT!

AYAMEKO-SAN ISN'T THE KILLER
SAY
BRIL..IANT KILNS, AND SO MANY OF THEM.
THE BODIES MUST HAVE BURNED WELL
BUT WHY YOU, OUT OF ALL PEOPLE?

YOU, THEIR ONE FAITHFUL.
SER-VANT
THAT'S SOME ATTACH-MENT YOU HAVE
I KILL THEM.
ANYONE WHO MAKES AYANEKO-SAN'S HEART WAVER

whoom
SHUT UP!
creak
WHAT!?
!!
CRACK
FOOT DECOR-ATIONS
WITH METAL PLATES
Spring
!!
SQUEEZE
cre
ak

SMA
Sh
THUD
YANK
AGH!
AGH!
AGH!
!!
AGH!
COUGH!
AGH!
PLING
YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY!!
JUMP
Y YOU.
SWAY
AGH!
CLICK

!
FWIP
grab
!
rush
SWING
!
!!!
SK
SK
HOW DID YOU...
!!?

fling
!!
stab
stab
WHOOSH
THUD.
AGH!

BUT YOUR GUESS WAS RIGHT
AGH!
THAT MAN WAS THE KILLER.

IT TOOK A LITTLE TIME TO GET READY... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT!?
drop
YES
SORRY FOR THE WAIT, SHIRO-KUN!

OFFICER!

'Es
I HEARD THAT MAKITANI-SAN WAS IN CHARGE OF MAINTAINING THE KILNS.
WHEN I WAS TALKING TO AYAMEKO-SAN THE OTHER DAY ,
I THOUGHT, SINCE THE BODIES FROM THE KIL...INGS HAD BURN MARKS AND..
THE WHOLE TIME WE WERE TALKING..
IF THERE WAS A FESTIVAL CELEBRATING SENSITIVITY TO KILLING INTENT, I WOULD BE CROWNED KING.
SENSITIVITY TO KILLING INTENT
KILL
KILL
shake
shake
THAT'S NOT A FESTIVAL, THAT'S SOME SORT OF SICK GAME
THAT MAN NEVER STOPPED WATCHING ME
HE WAS LOOKING AT ME AS IF HE WANTED TO KILL ME RIGHT THEN AND THERE

BUT WHY
TO THINK THAT MURDER WAS GOING ON RIGHT WITHIN OUR MANSION WALLS. .
step
!
CLACK
CLACK
I CAN'T BE..IEVE IT!
MAKITANI WAS THE KILLER ?
YELK
cRA
CK
AGH!
!?

MAKITANI! WHAT THE HELL HAVE YOU DONE!?
AGHH!
YOU DID IT ALL!? YOU LITTLE SHIT!
STOMP
GAH!
DIE! DIE, YOU GOOD-FOR-NOTHING!
GRIND GRIND GRIND
Im Im Sorry
MAKE UP FOR IT WITH YOUR LIFE! DIE!
CRACK
AGH!
SMASH
!!

OH PLEASE FORGIVE ME, AYAMEKO-SAMA..
AH.
DRAG
I DIDN'T WANT TO BE HIT ANY-MORE..!
I. I DIDN'T
drip
drip
GRAB
LET ME GO!
STOP IT!
WHENEVER YOU DEVELOPED FEELINGS FOR A MAN. YOU BECAME A WHOLE DIFFERENT PERSON.
AND YOU WOULD PUNISH ME
SMACK
I KNOW I'M UGLY!!
I I don't think so at all...
tremble
tremble
YOU PROBABLY THINK THAT GENTLE-MEN LIKE TODO-SAN WOULD NEVER LOOK AT ME, DON'T YOU!?
ERGH!!

ALL LOOK-ING DOWN ON ME!!
AHH!
KICK!
SHUT IT, YOU BHIT!
DON'T YOU DARE THINK THAT A LOWER-CLASS HUMAN LIKE YOU CAN TALK BACK TO A HIGH-CLASS DESCENDANT LIKE ME!
YES!
I'M A NOBLE LADY!
BUT ALL OF YOU, HASUMIKO, FATHER, THE GIRLS AT SCHOOL...
I WAS TERRIFIED OF YOU.
I.
WHA...
WH...
I COULDN'T ESCAPE AND LEAVE HER BEHIND.
BUT SINCE MY SICK MOTHER WAS UNDER THE CARE OF THE HOUSE

AH
SNAP
AHHH
AHHH
AHHH
AHHH
FLINCH
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE!?
grovel
I'M SORRY M'LADY
PLEASE FORGIVE ME
FOR-GIVE ME
I AM JUST A PIECE OF RUBBISH
I DIDN'T REALIZE YOUR ILLNESS AT ALL
AYAMEKO, I
I'm sorry
Please for give me
step
FORGIVE ME
I AM JUST A PIECE OF RUBBISH
I'M SORRY!

WE'RE ALMOST
...LIKE JUXTAPOSED MIRRORS
WE'RE EXACTLY THE SAME.
FUNNY, ISN'T IT?
WE WERE BOTH SO CAUGHT UP IN OUR UNHAPPINESS, SO TAINTED
BANG
Paint
Paint
WELCOME.

WEAK, WEAK
WEAK, WEAK
peek
OFFICER, PLEASE STOP THAT
YOU SEEMED TO HAVE TAKEN A LIKING TO AYAMEKO-SAN.
SO I THOUGHT YOU'D BE FEELING DOWN.
...AND WHY?
sigh
Where did you buy that?
I'M SORRY I JUST WANTED TO CHEER YOU UP

ACK
OW!
!?
GRAB
DON'T FORCE YOURSELF, SHIRO-KUN!!
HEY
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR LEG?
!?
I WAS INTERESTED IN HER.
BUT I DON'T FEEL PARTIC-ULARLY UNHAPPY
YOU DISLOCATED A BONE FROM LAST DAY'S INCIDENT!?
WHAT!?
BUT THE KILLER SAID YOU HAD METAL-PLATED FOOT DECORATIONS!!
OH THAT
IT WAS A LIE TO FRIGHTEN HIM.
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO PUT METAL IN DECORATIONS LIKE THOSE
I DON'T LIKE DOCTORS.
I CAN FIX THIS MYSELF
ARE YOU STUPID!? WE HAVE TO GO TO THE DOCTOR AT ONCE...
breathe
sling

...GH!
TREMBLE TREMBLE
...!!
'LRIGHT
wheeze
IT'S FIXED
wheeze
CRA
!!!
drop
I CAN'T TRUST YOU!!
BAKA!!
NO!!
SHUT UP! I'LL TAKE YOU THERE IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO!
borrowed clothes

PEOPLE SAY THAT I'VE SUDDENLY BECOME MORE BEAUTIFUL LATELY
HASUMIKO, DEAR
THANKS TO THAT, I'VE MET A NICE GENTLEMAN
I'LL... INTRODUCE YOU TWO SOMETIME
A WHILE AGO I DID HAVE A LIKING FOR THE UMBRELLA-MAKER.
BUT THAT MAN IS NO GOOD
MAYBE THIS HUGE CHANGE CAME BECAUSE I REALIZED THAT THE PERSON AT THE ROOT OF MY COMPLEX
WAS ACTUALLY NOT AS FORTUNATE AS I THOUGHT
IT'S HARD WORK BEING BEAUTIFUL, ISN'T IT HASUMIKO?

SOMETHING MUST HAVE BEEN WRONG WITH ME
WE LIVE IN A DIFFERENT WORLD FROM WHERE HE LIVES.
HM?
WHAT'S WRONG?
SHUCCZE
SUDE SUDE
OH
ALL RIGHT
IT'S NOTHING
BY THE WAY
SHIRO-KUN.

I'M SORRY I FORCED YOU INTO THIS
I TOLD YOU THAT I COULDN'T ARREST HIM UNLESS HE WAS IN THE ACT
THAT'S WHY YOU DECIDED TO BE THE BAIT, ISN'T IT?
I JUST DID IT BECAUSE IT SEEMED INTERESTING
OH, NO.
I THINK YOU'RE GIVING ME
SHIRO-KUN.
A LOT MORE CREDIT THAN I DESERVE BUT PERSONALLY
TRUTH BE TOLD
CLACK
CLACK
THERE YOU GO AGAIN! STOP FORCING YOURSELF!!
OW! NO PINCHING, PLEASE!
SQUEEZE
PINCH

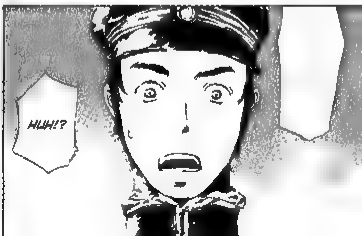
I THINK WHAT LIES BENEATH YOUR SKIN..
SHOULD GET MORE CREDIT AS WELL.
IF YOU SAY SO, OFFICER.
BY THE WAY SHIRO-KUN.
I JUST FELT SOMETHING ON MY HAND
'ES
I'M NOT WEARING ANY UNDERWEAR, OF COURSE
I TOLD YOU TO WEAR A LOINCLOTH, DAMMIT!!
smack
AGH!
END

I should never have said that.
Blood brother?
Yamada Kazuya age 7
FROM TODAY I HEREBY NAME YOU MY BLOOD BROTHER.
ALL RIGHT
Ten years ago
Aragami Sakurouta age 8

How could I have known...

that years later, I'd grow to hate him so much?

Imagine what it's like for your younger brother (or sister) to be better than you in everything.



第三の話

兄弟懐歌（きょうだいかいか）

the third story - kyoudai kaika

nostalgic song of brothers

I'M SURE YOU ALL KNOW THIS ALREADY.
TODAY'S ISSUE IS CONCERNING RUMOURED DOG ATTACKS IN CHIMATA.
BUT THIS ISN'T JUST ANY NORMAL DOG
THE BODIES FOUND SO FAR HAVE HAVE BEEN MANGLED SO MUCH THEY'RE UNRECOGNIZABLE
THAT CONCLUDES OUR MEETING!
SO!
AFTER ALL, IT IS DUE TO INATTENTIVENESS THAT ONE STABS HEIR GUM WHILE EATING A POTATO CHI-
IT SHOULD BE FINE AS LONG AS YOU DON'T LET YOUR GUARD DOWN.
clap!
AH, SCARE YOU A LITTLE?
gloom
HEY, SABURIOLITA.
DAMN, I DON'T LIKE THE DEA OF THAT DOG
We're done.
We're done.
whew...
file out

HUH? THE ONLY "BLOOD BROTHERS" YOU'LL SEE THESE DAYS ARE YAKUZA AND HOMOS, DUDE
Heh.
BUT YOU'RE HIS BLOOD BROTHER.
HAVE YOU SEEN KOJIRO?
IT'S BEEN THREE MONTHS ALREADY
WHAT, DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE STILL IGNORING KOJIRO?
HOW SHOULD I KNOW?
SHUT UP.
FLIP
HE ISN'T USEFUL FOR SHIT'
HAHA, YEAH. SABUROUTA THE WUSS
WE..., SINCE YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT KOJIRO, I HAVE NOTHING MORE TO SAY TO YOU.
!
twitch
ha ha ha ha
AM NOT!! I AM TOO USEFUL FOR SHIT!!

How much tea did you have to pour to get that?
SHIT, THIS GUY'S RIGHT ARM IS HUGE!
HE DOESN'T EVEN PLAY TENNIS?
DON'T UNDER-ESTIMATE THE POWER OF MY TEA-POURING ARM*!
I'LL WIPE THIS TISSUE BOX'S WORTH OF IT!
THIS ISN'T FUNNY AT ALL!
*tea-pouring is a role reserved for the lowest ranks in the workplace (like the coffee gopher)
Hmph!
ALL EVERYONE SEEMS TO CARE ABOUT IS DAMN KOJIRO!
My one defining trait would maybe be that my family is rich.
And I'm below average.
Yay. I won the Kendo tournament!
Sure, he's always been above-average in everything
OH MR. VICE-HEAD
AH, ARAGAMI-KUN.
...
I JUST DON'T STAND OUT AS MUCH AS HIM...
STOMP
STOMP
BUT I WORK HARD DOING MY OFFICE DUTIES TOO!

Hahaha
I HOPE TO SEE THAT AGAIN.
YOUR NAKED MONKEY-DANCE WAS ALSO HIGHLY ENTERTAINING
HUH?
OH. GLADLY
AH YES, THAT WAS VERY GOOD
THAT RESTAURANT THE OTHER NIGHT WAS EXCELLENT I HOPE TO JOIN YOU AGAIN FOR DINNER.
UH AN HONOUR, SIR
NOT AFRAID TO PULL ALL THE STOPS, HUH.
DID YOU HEAR THAT? NAKED MONKEY-DANCING
YES, SIR
I'LL BE GOING NOW
GO ON, LAUGH AT ME!
Hahahaha
DOES HE WANT A PROMOTION THAT BADLY? THE USELESS TWAT
TALK ABOUT LETTING HIS MONEY DO THE TALKING
I HEARD HE TOOK THEM FOR A BUSINESS DINNER THROUGH HIS PARENTS' CONNECTIONS

GRIN
bump
KOJIRO!
HEY SABUR-OUTA
STOMP
STOMP
WHAT'S WRONG WITH USING MONEY FOR POWER? I'VE GOT NOTHING ELSE!
STOMP
WHOEVER DOES IT FIRST WINS!
HEY!
stomp
stomp
from
FREEZE
YOU WHO ALWAYS GETS PRAISED
I'LL NEVER KNOW IF YOU DON'T TELL ME!!
SABU-ROUTA!! WHAT IS IT THAT YOU DISLIKE ABOUT ME!?
AS IF YOU'D UNDER-STAND!
EVERY-THING!!
YOU WOULD NEVER UNDER-STAND!
I HATE YOUR EXISTENCE! NOW LEAVE ME ALONE!

SHIRO
DRINK A LITTLE MORE
SURE
THIS SCENT
wa-fi
PLAY US SOME SHAMISEN* FOR A CHANGE
SWIG
totter
SHIRO!
YAE-NEESAN**, DID YOU TAKE A NEW CUSTOMER TODAY?
OH, CAN YOU TELL?
**sister
*a stringed instrument like a guitar

I THINK IT WAS ABOUT TWO HOURS AGO. HE WAS AN INTERESTING PERSON.
SHIRO
FROM TODAY I WILL START WEARING THIS, YOUR "LEAST FAVOURITE FRAGRANT OIL
TRACK THE SMELL BACK TO ME
IT'S ONLY HUMAN NATURE THAT THE THINGS YOU HATE THE MOST
rub
ARE THE THINGS YOU'RE "LEAST" LIKELY TO FORGET
MAYBE IT WAS HIM.
AH!
PUSH
I'M GOING HOME
SHIRO, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
WHA- AT!?

YOU IDIOT!
SHIRO-KUN SNEAKING OUT THE BACK DOOR OF A BROTHE.. IN BROAD DAYLIGHT? ENJOYING YOURSE..F?
twitch
twitch
O-OFFICER
FWUMP
SUCH ENTERTAINMENT AT THIS TIME OF DAY!
HAVE SOME SHAME!
FWOO
MEN ARE TYPICALLY LIKE THIS, OFFICER THEY'RE READY FOR ACTION ANY DAY, IF GIVEN THE CHANCE
WELL, DON'T COME CRYING TO ME IF YOU END UP GETTING ANY SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED ACTION, ALL RIGHT!?
OFFICER, WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN A BACK ALLEYWAY LIKE THIS?
smirk
F-FOR YOUR INFORMATION, I WAS SEARCHING FOR A RABID DOG!! I'M NOT LIKE YOU!!
Don't smirk at me!
GOOD GOD
sigh
I'M GETTING A HEADACHE FROM ALL THIS

ork..!!
IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?
I SEE . . . BUT IS IT SOMETHING TO BE SO CONCERNED ABOUT?
puff
YOU'RE NOT A CHILD ANYMORE, OFFICER.
HE DIDN'T WE'RE NOT TALKING ABOUT A TORTURE CHAMBER HERE.
SO.
YOUR OLDER BLOOD-BROTHER, OUT OF INTENSE DISLIKE FOR YOU, PEELED BACK EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOUR CUTICLES, AND...
peel
SEE YOU! BE CAREFUL!
WAVE !!
CER-TAINLY
I HAVE TO GET BACK TO THE SEAR-CH
BLANK
NO. I'M CONCERNED AND YOU CAN'T STOP ME!
GLARE
UGH HUH
Too close

THIS IS SERIOUS.
slogger
slogger
COULD I HAVE DONE ?
SIGH
WHAT
!
GRRR
!!!
BUT
IS
IS THAT IT !?

*an honorific, =Mr

WE'RE NOT LIKE THAT ANYMORE!! I'VE ALWAYS HATED THAT GUY!
REALLY?
NO
SO.
YOU'RE KOJIRO'S FRIEND. DID HE TELL YOU TO COME HERE?
WHAT KIND OF PERSON THE OFFICER'S BLOOD-BROTHER WOULD BE
I WAS JUST CURIOUS TO SEE
grin
HI!!
FLINCH
''
Hello~
I REMEMBER THEM AS A POOR-LOOKING FAMILY THAT WAS NEW IN TOWN
IT WAS TEN YEARS AGO THAT I MET HIM.
BE NICE TO HIM. ?
AND THIS IS MY SON KOJIRO! HE'S A YEAR YOUNGER THAN YOU!! BE NICE TO HIM, ALL RIGHT??
Woohoo!
O-OKAY
YOU'RE ARAGAMI'S BOY, RIGHT?? I'M YAMADA HARUTARO!

I agreed to play with him in order to get closer to his sister
Father
LEAVE IT TO ME, FATHER!
CLASP
Please be nice to her too!
THIS IS HIS YOUNGER SISTER AGURI
Whoa
HIS SISTER'S SO CUTE!!
Gadar
HOW COULD ANYONE BE NICE TO THIS BRAT!?
Back then he was as bratty as kids come.
BE HONOURED!
ALL RIGHT FROM TODAY I HEREBY NAME YOU MY BLOOD-BROTHER
Blood-brother?
WHA!?
I'M NOT TAKING NO ORDERS FROM SOME SUPER SAIYAN!
Hoh!
WHOA!! COOL ARMOR!
HEY, THAT'S FATHER'S TREASURE!
HEY, YOU HAVE SO MANY SNACKS IN YOUR HOUSE!
HEY, THAT'S MINE!!
MY HAIR IS COOL! AND DON'T MAKE FUN OF SUPER SAIYANS! THEY'RE FROM THE PLANET VEGETA AND THEY'RE SO CRAZY STRONG THAT...
MUNCH
MUNCH

Every time he came to my house, he wreaked havoc.
CRASH!!
Mother's vanity glass!!
MOMMY...!!!
creak
creak
IT FITS ME PERFECTLY!!
HEY SABUROLITA, LOOK AT THAT!
And finally one day...
YOU LIKE HIM, RIGHT? I'LL GET IT FOR YOU.
ARE YOU TRYING TO IMPRESS ME? BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT!!
DOESN'T THAT FRUIT LOOK LIKE SABU-CHAN"!?
IS THAT WHAT SABU-CHAN IS TO YOU!!?
*nickname for singer-songwriter Kitajima Saburo, whose nostrils are a prominent feature
KOJIRO!!
GAGHH
SPLASH
KOJIRO!!
SPLASH
?!
Whoops.

I'M GONNA DROWN! HELP ME!
I CAN'T SWIM EITHER!!
whoosh
I-I CAN'T SWIM!!
HELP ME, SABU-ROUTA!!
Huh?
teeter
SLIP
!!
throb
OH NO, OH NO !!
THIS RIVER ISN'T ENOUGH TO DROWN HIM BUT STILL !!
throb
freeze
freeze
Was that an "ahhhhhh"?
Ahhhh?
was so unconventionally heard by adults nearby
And I was rescued some ways down stream.
There he is!
He was saved
This unusually restrained sounding moan that I uttered
SABU-ROUTA-!!

ARAGAMI-KUN, IT'S YOUR SHIFT!
WHAT I WANTED TO SAY WAS NOTHING EVER GOOD HAPPENS WHEN HE'S AROUND
RIGHT RIGHT
GAHHHHHHHHH
GAHHHHHHHH
GAHHHHHHH
SPLASH
Once I was rescued, I clung to my mother and made a brilliant scene by exhibiting all manners of bodily secretions
ARAGAMI-DONO!!
SO THERE YOU HAVE IT.
TWITCH
HEY, ARE YOU LAUGHING AT ME?
AFTER THAT, I BEGAN TO BE REFERRED TO AS "THE DOUBLE FOUNTAIN" LIKE SOME TOURIST ATTRACTION...
AS I THOUGHT, THE WIND HAS A DIFFERENT SMELL.
crille crille
SWISH
SLAM

NGH
CRACK
RRRAM
THERE'S SOMETHING WITHIN.
A HUMAN HAND ?
I KNEW IT. THAT'S NOT A DOG!!
PANT
PANT
WHOOSH
STAB
!!!
YELP

skid
...!?
!?
I HAD A HARD TIME FINDING HIM, BUT
I'LL... TAKE HIM HOME NOW
ARE YOU THAT THING'S OWNER?
YOU'RE STRONG THAT'S KIND OF AMAZING.
AH, I APOLOGIZE
HE CAUSED QUITE A RUCKUS.
HM? YES, I AM.
..HEY

WHO ARE YOU!?
WHAT-
OHH, YES, I APOLOGIZE
WHAT IS THAT THING!? THERE ARE ALREADY SEVEN PEOPLE WHO'VE DIED BECAUSE OF...!!
TWITCH
TWITCH
hahaha
HE'LL STAY PUT FOR A WHILE
!
DON'T WORRY, AFTER YOU, NO ONE ELSE WILL DIE.
SCHICK
FOR-GIVE ME
AGH
WHEN DID HE GET ME !?
NNGH
crumple
FLAP

crack
crack
crack
crack
crack
crack
CLICK
THUD
THUD
THUD
AHH
Squeeze
WHIRRRR
YOUR LEGS ARE MINE.
!!
THUD
SHING
GEE, AREN'T YOU A POLICE OFFICER?
THAT WAS PATHETIC YOU'RE NOT NEARLY GOOD ENOUGH.

WH...
KIK
NGH!
CAN'T YOU MOVE ANYMORE?
HOW DID HE SHOOT BULLETS FROM HIS HANDS
WHAT WAS THAT MACHINE
PAAN
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
KIK
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
WHAT SHOULD I DO...!?

THUMP
THERE'S NO WAY I COULD STAND UP TO THAT
WHO IS THAT GUY!? IF EVEN KOJIRO HIMSELF CAN'T BEAT HIM, HE MUST BE PRETTY STRONG
HERE I WAS ON MY DAILY ROUNDS.
AND I HAVE TO COME ACROSS THIS!
If I go back for help, it'll take them at least twenty minutes to get here.
. He might die during that time. .
CRACK THUD
HE MIGHT DIE
KICK
I SHOULD HEAD BACK TO THE DIVISION AND ASK FOR BACK-UP
sneak
NO ONE WILL BE SAVED
IT'LL BE FUTILE.
BUT IF I GO OUT THERE NOW WE'LL BOTH DEFINITELY DIE
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
SABUROUTA.

I DON'T WANNA DIE. I DON'T WANNA DIE.
I DON'T WANNA DIE ''
PANT
SABUROUTA.
SABU-ROUTA.
NO, I DON'T WANNA DIE
NO, NO!
HAA
AND ON TOP OF THAT I'M A TRAITOR ''
LOOK AT ME I CAN'T DO ANYTHING
IT'S THEM.
HE SUCKS, BUT HE THINKS HE'S SO GOOD BECAUSE HE'S RICH.
HE DIDN'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS UNTIL YOU CAME, YOU KNOW.
TWITCH
HEY KOJIRO!
STOP PLAYING WITH SABU-ROUTA.
HEY DID YOU HEAR ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED? HE GOT WASHED AWAY BY A RIVER AND PEED HIS PANTS OVER IT
HE USED TO BE BULLIED, ACTUALLY
HAHAHA!
FLUSH
HAHAHA!
GROSS!

KOJIRO.
THUMP
SLIDE
hahahah
IT WAS GROSS!
YEAH!! YOU SHOULD'VE SEEN IT!!
PFFH!
TWEEEE
HE'S REALLY COOL
BUT
FEEL LIKE THROWING UP
I
PAH!
PAH!
whirr
MY HEAD
IS SPINNING
HE WAS THAT SCARED BUT HE STILL JUMPED IN TO SAVE ME!!
HE'S AWESOME!!

I'M HIS BLOOD-BROTHER YOU KNOW
I WANNA BE LIKE SABUROUTA ONE DAY
ISN'T IT COOL?
...NO.
I didn't jump in.
No, I actually just fell in

But I failed.
I can't I'm sorry I can't
I couldn't help him.
woof! woof! woof!
Sakuroura, make them go away!
I don't get it either
Show me how to do this!
After that, I to eat to be the best brother I could be.
But I never had the courage to say it.
We got older, and I began to feel even worse compared to him
I didn't like to admit it, but I was jealous
hahaha
I thought getting myself promoted would help.
But that didn't go well either.
I was ashamed to be jealous of my younger blood-brother
I hated myself
But I couldn't do anything about it
I started to hate him
Maybe I was just afraid
of him finding out that I was je---

YOU'RE NOT GOOD ENOUGH TO BE MY BLOOD-BROTHER.
Maybe, one day he would find out how pathetic I really was, and he'd
CRACK
I figured I started keeping a distance from him
click
PASSED OUT? ALL RIGHT
THE NEXT ONE'S YOUR LAST
THUD
HELP ME, SABUROTA!!
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
KOJIRO..!!

to accomplish all this time?
.What was I trying..
I'M GONNA DROWN!
HELP ME, SABUROUTA!!
What was I trying to accomplish?
Weak, powerless me
haha!
YOU'RE STUPID, YOU SHRIMP!
I threw away my pride.
ahahah
ooo ee!
WHISPER
WHISPER
Everyone looked down on me
I
WANNA BE LIKE SABUROUTA ONE DAY
Help me, Saburouta!!

H
AHH
AH
AH
TAP
AAAH
AH
DASH
DASH
AH
DASH
DASH
AH
whoosh!
!!
SHAKE
KOJIRO!!

WHO ARE YOU?
FLINCH
VOICE
HAH
TREMBLE
COME ON SPEAK!!
MY VOICE
My great-sk.
I... I SHOW YOU...
TREMBLE
DO IT!!
NOW!!
HUH?
DO IT!!
RRRRRRRIP
RRRRRRRIP

AHHHHH
JUST ONCE I WANTED TO
JUST ONCE!
SOMEONE!!
RIP
RIP
!!?
BANG!
STOP IT!!!
CLANG!!
WHOOSH
!!
Slide

HM?
SWAY
I FOLLOWED THE SCENT HERE BUT I COULDN'T GET THE EXACT LOCATION.
THANK YOU, ARAGAMI-DONO.
!!
HEY.
IS THAT YOU, SHIRO?
THAT THINGS WOULD BE THIS BAD.
OH MY
BUT
FWUMP
I HAD NO IDEA.

FUMBLE
YES
NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
SHI
HUH!? NO WAY!
CUT IT OUT!!
NG
DASH
GOOD LORD...
JUMP
WHOOM
HSOOM
HSOOM

SEE
YOU'RE SLOW
crack crack
crack
crack crack
KICK
4444
SLICE
4444
STAB
STAB
STAB

!
FLAP
DANGLE
GRAB
YANK
SO YOU HAVE A WHOLE SET ON YOU.
THERE'S STILL NO WAY YOU COULD WIN AGAINST ME
D-DON'T KILL ME
NIIYA*
HAHAHA I WOULDN'T DO THAT. YOU'RE MY ADORABLE LITTLE BLOOD-BROTHER.
BUT ATTACKING YOUR NIIYA LIKE THAT, WHAT A BAD BOY
I'M S-SORRY
*brother

COME BACK TO ME, SHIRO.
THEN I'LL FORGIVE YOU.
KNOWING YOU, IT'S PROBABLY JUST A PHASE.
CRUNCH
EVEN FOR EVERYTHING ELSE?
HAHA. OF COURSE
ALL AN ACT, HUH.
BRATTY AS ALWAYS
SAME FOR YOU, NIIYA.
IN HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT
GRAB
I HAVE MORE SKILL THAN YOU.

ARE YOU STILL GOING TO KILL ME?
I'M YOUR BLOOD-BROTHER
SO HE FELL ON PURPOSE TOO
ALL THE MORE REASON TO
KICK
THEY WERE ASKING FOR HELP
yell
shout
HEY!! THIS WAY! THE VOICE CAME FROM HERE!
TWITCH
DASH
flit
SEE YOU, SHIRO.

STEP
glob
JUMP
HE SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO STAND
WHAT IS HE ?
HUH ?
HSSSHH
HSSSHH
HSSSHH
HSSSHH

CREAK
SHUTTER
WHAT DID YOU DO TO SABUROUTA AND SHIRO-KUN!?
!!
AGH
SWAY
SHING

JUMP
GRAB
THERE'S A FALLEN MAN!!
OH
HERE!
CROWD
SHIRO-KUN.
HEY YOU, YOU NEED TREATMENT FOR THOSE WOUNDS!
YOU'RE HURT
I'M FINE, OFFICER. YOU SHOULDN'T MOVE AROUND SO MUCH !
..HOW'S SABU-ROUTA?
THANK YOU, SHIRO-K
SLIDE
OFF-ICER!!
GOOD
CREAK
HE'S JUST UNCON-SCIOUS
splish
splish
I SEE.

THAT MAN MUST BE DEALT WITH SOON.
HIM AND HIS D*S GHSTING TACTICS
IT'S ONLY HUMAN NATURE THAT THE THINGS YOU HATE THE MOST
ARE THE THINGS YOU'RE LEAST LIKELY TO FORGET
DID YOU FINISH YOUR ROUNDS?
YUP, PERFECTLY
I GOT QUITE A LOT OF GOODS TODAY
AND I FOUND WHAT I'D BEEN LOOKING FOR
HEY, YOUR LEG IS HURT!
I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG IT'S BEEN SINCE I SAW AN INJURY ON YOU!
YEAH, THAT'S THE THING
I RAN ACROSS THE MOST INTERESTING GUY TODAY
HEY, ANRI

HE TOOK THAT DOG ON AND DIDN'T DIE
WOW AND THAT'S WHY YOU HAD A HARD TIME KILLING HIM?
NO, I HAVEN'T KILLED HIM YET
HUH!?
YOU HAVEN'T? BUT HE'S SEEN THE DOG!
DON'T WORRY EVEN IF INFORMATION LEAKS, THE POLICE WON'T DO ANYTHING
A PORTION OF THE HIGHER RANKS HAVE BEEN COVERING UP THE EXISTENCE OF "THE COUNTRY OF FLESH"
AND THAT GUY IS INTERESTING
I DESTROYED HIS KNEES AND HE STILL STOOD UP
PRETTY TOUGH, HUH?
HE SEEMS TO BE A FRIEND OF MY BROTHER'S
GOTTA GIVE HIM GOOD TREATMENT
HAHA!

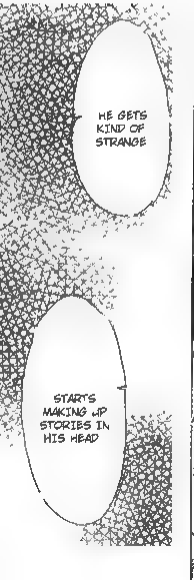
IN CELEBRATION OF KOJIRO'S COMPLETE RECOVERY!!
AHAHA
IT'S MY TREAT, EAT UP!
AH, I SEE. IRRITATING AS ALWAYS, HUH?
COMPLETE RECOVERY IN ONE MONTH. WHAT STRENGTH.
GOTCHA! I'M ALREADY EATING YOUR PORTION, TOO!
BUT ENOUGH FOR TODAY!
OF COURSE!!
AS WE'LL AS THE SUSPICIOUS BLONDE MAN.
IN TIME, WE'LL DEFINITELY HAVE TO CAPTURE THAT DOG-THING.
ARAGAMI-DONO HAS CHEERED UP SO MUCH
Hahah, early bird gets the worm!
HEY! THAT'S MY TEMPURA!!
LET'S EAT TO OUR HEARTS' CONTENT!

After the accident
KOJIRO
YOU WERE TRYING TO SWIM TOWARDS ME THE BEST YOU COULD
I REMEMBER THAT CLEARLY
HUH?
TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I JUST SLIPPED AND FELL INTO THE RIVER
WHA?
IS THAT WHAT YOU'VE BEEN WORRIED ABOUT ALL THIS TIME!?
YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T NOTICE, BUT
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING SABUROUTA?
I'VE NEVER BEEN ABANDONED BY YOU.
WHENEVER I GOT INTO TROUBLE, YOU'D ALWAYS RUN AWAY WITH ME YOU CRIED WITH ME
DOES NOT BEING ABLE TO RESCUE ME DISQUALIFY YOU AS A BLOOD-BROTHER?

SHOCK
IT'S. BECAUSE I CARE ABOUT HIM.
TUG
BUT I AM NOT FRIENDS WITH HIM BECAUSE HE'S STRONG
FOR EXAMPLE. I'M FRIENDS WITH SHIRO-KUN HERE
SAME FOR YOU, SABUROUTA.
IS THAT NOT ENOUGH?
WILL YOU NOT BE MY BLOOD-BROTHER ANYMORE?
PUNCH!
THAT'S A DAMN EMBARRASSING THING TO SAY, DID YOU KNOW THAT!?
SHUT UP! DON'T SAY ANY MORE!!
tear
s.

As I thought, this man is interesting.
EEEEEGH
PUNCH
SHUT UP!! YOU PISS ME OFF!
DO YOU HATE ME ENOUGH TO PUNCH ME!? I'M HURT, YOU KNOW!!
PUNCH
HAHAHA!

He can capture people's hearts with no intention for profit.



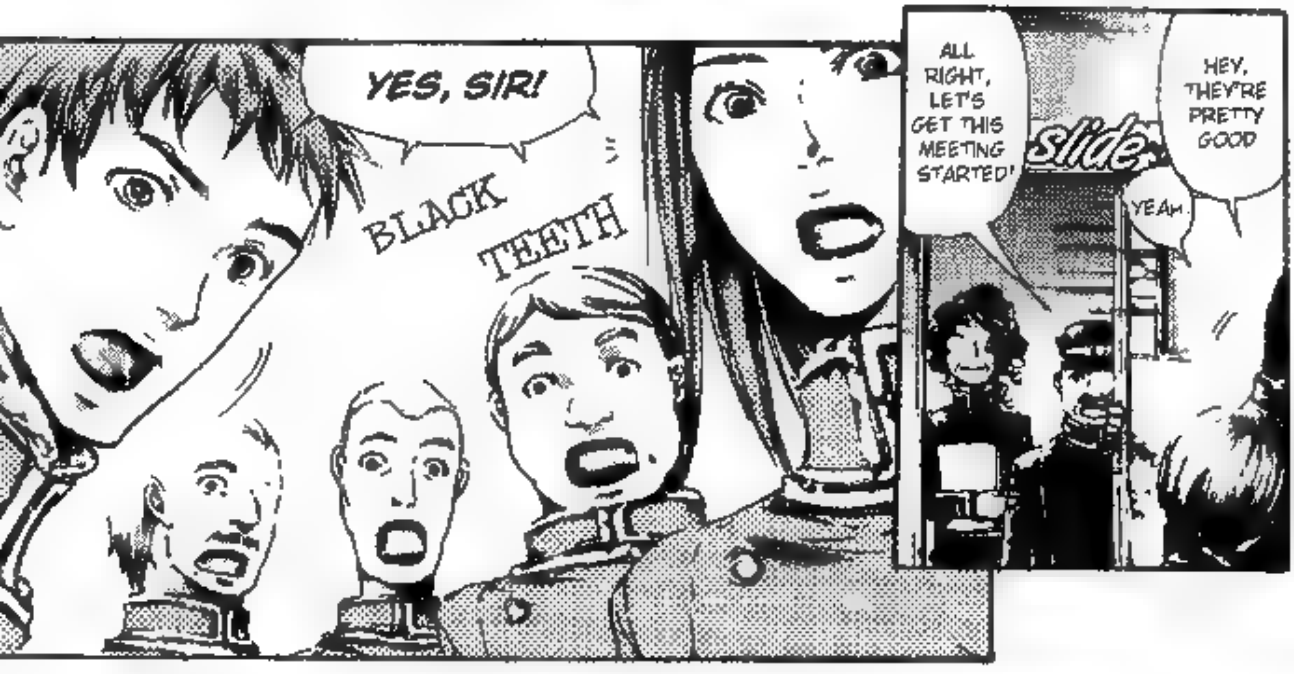
GLUG GLUG GLUG GLUG
HE'S ALREADY DRINKING
...AND HE CHASED ME AROUND ALL NIGHT
COME BACK HERE!
FAKE SWORD
ONE TIME HE WAS CONVINCED THAT I KILLED HIS PARENTS AND HE HAD TO AVENGE THEM.
I just to tell you, his parent's are alive and well.
UH HUH
GLARE
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
WH-WHAT?
IOOOOOOOI
THUNK
IT LOOKS LIKE THE STORY OF THE DAY IS HIM AS "THE STRICT FATHER", ME AS "HIS WIFE", AND YOU AS "THE GOOD-FOR-NOTHING SON"
WHISPER
WHISPER
I SEE. QUITE DIFFICULT
SHIRO!! YOU'RE ALREADY IN EIGHTH GRADE!
I WANT TO SEE YOU STUDYING AT THAT DESK, YOU GOOD-FOR-NOTHING!!
SABUROUKO!! WHY ISN'T DINNER READY YET!?
!?

YOU'RE MAKING IT WORSE, DUMBASS!!
SHUT THE FUCK UP, DAD!! YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO TELL ME WHAT TO DO!!
WHAT THE F IS THIS GUY TALKING ABOUT!?
SHARP
I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW THAT ONCE I'M GIVEN A ROLE, I WILL DO IT JUSTICE.
HEY HEY HEY--!! YOU DON'T NEED TO ADD ANY MORE DRAMA!! THIS ISN'T A SOAP OPERA!
STOP TAKING IT OUT ON MOM, YOU SHIT!! SHE'S CARRYING MY KID!!
SABU-ROUKO!! I DON'T WANT TO HEAR THAT KIND OF LANGUAGE!!
OH MY, EXCUSE ME I-I DIDN'T MEAN TO
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THEM. ?
BRING IT ON, FUCKER!!
YOU THINK YOU CAN LAY YOUR HANDS ON MY WOMAN AND GET AWAY WITH IT!?
STOP IT, THE TWO OF YOU!!
SIGH
SHARP
THE VIEWERS ALWAYS LIKE THINGS TO BE A LITTLE SCANDALOUS.
WHO ARE THESE "VIEWERS" YOU SPEAK OF!? AND WHAT DOES THAT MAKE US, HUH!?

RUSTLE
thud
WHAT'S THAT?
clomp
clomp
DRAG
Neko onna
Neko onna*
Neko onna..
Help me.
Neko onna
Help me.
drag
the fourth story
*literally means cat woman
DASH
AHHHH!!

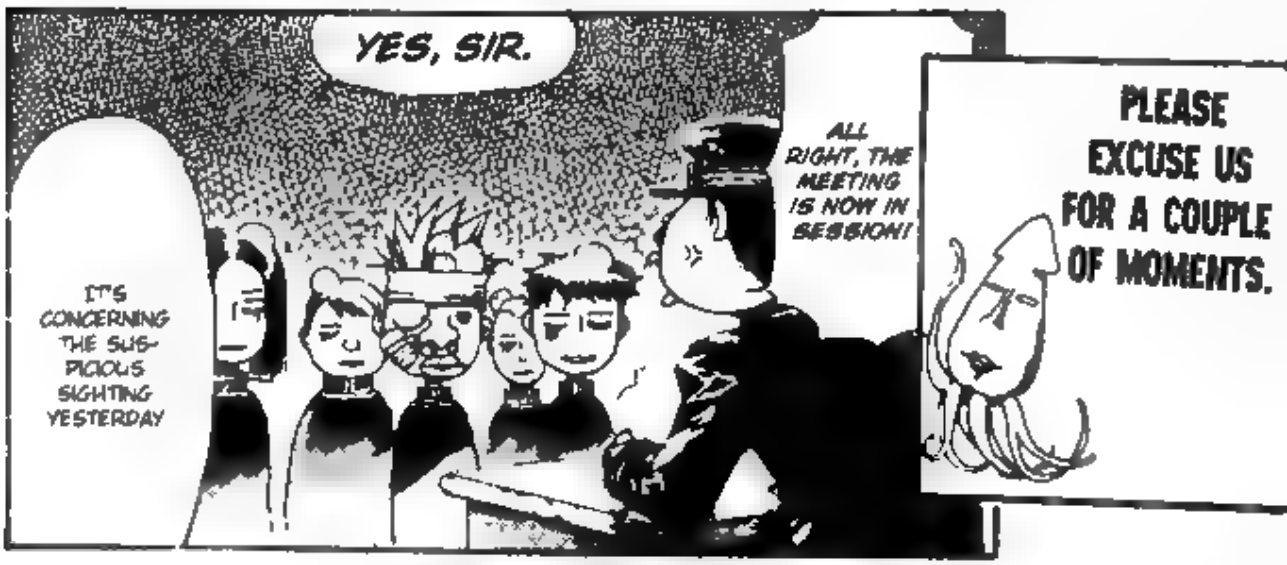
flutter
the fourth story - three people, gazing at butterflies

Tadaa! We just shipped these candies in!
There's lots!! Help yourselves!
JUST TRY ONE
IS IT ANY GOOD?
WHY DOES YOUR PLACE KEEP SHIPPING IN WEIRD THINGS?
THEY'RE PITCH BLACK


YES, SIR!
BLACK TEETH
ALL RIGHT, LET'S GET THIS MEETING STARTED!
HEY, THEY'RE PRETTY GOOD
YEAH

EEEEE-EEEK!
E...

WHAT DID YOU SAY!?
Gotcha! They're candies made of squid ink!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH MY TEETH!?
CALM DOWN, RURI-KUN.
Eek
A- ALL MY OFFICERS HAVE BLACK TEETH!! WHAT KIND OF A CURSE IS THIS!?
YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY WITH THIS, SQUID-FACE!
tehee


YES, SIR.
ALL RIGHT, THE MEETING IS NOW IN SESSION!
PLEASE EXCUSE US FOR A COUPLE OF MOMENTS.
IT'S CONCERNING THE SUS-PICIOUS SIGHTING YESTERDAY

KOJIRO, THE DETAILS
THE SAID INDIVIDUAL WAS SEEN ROAMING THE STREETS AFTER DARK, CHANTING "NEKO ONNA" REPEATEDLY
YES, SIR.
SHE HAS NO HANDS OR FEET AND CRAWLS ON THE GROUND SHE'S BEEN SEEN IN THE EAST DISTRICT FIVE TIMES.

WELL.
SAOTOME, ANY THOUGHTS?
HM.
APART FROM HER UNUSUAL APPEARANCE,
THERE SEEMS TO BE NOTHING HARMFUL ABOUT HER
whispers whispers
NO IDEA
WHAT'S A NEKO ONNA? SOME DEMON?
THERE HASN'T EVEN BEEN ANY CASUALTIES
IS IT SUCH A SERIOUS CASE?
HUH? SAOTOME-SAN'S IN CHARGE OF THIS CASE ?
I WANT TO FIND HER ASAP
WITH AS LITTLE HARM DONE AS POSSIBLE
I WANT TO MOBILIZE THREE-FIFTHS OF OUR FORCE IMMEDIATELY TO SEARCH FOR THIS SUSPECT
HAVE WE FORGOTTEN, GENTLEMEN?
DO WE NEED THAT MANY PEOPLE FOR JUST A...
THREE-FIFTHS!?
FLIP

THERE'S ALWAYS A CHANCE THAT A SMALL INCIDENT LIKE THIS
IS JUST THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG
IN THIS SHORT TIME-FRAME
FIVE SIGHT-INGS
A RE-STRICTED AREA OF ACTIVITY
LACK OF ENERGY
POS-SIBLY FROM STAR-VATION
COR-RUPTION IN PER-SONALITY
POSSIBLY HAVING EXPERIENCED ABUSE
INCOMPRE-HENSIBLE SPEECH
NO ATTEMPT AT DISGUISE
IM-PUL-SIVE
UN-PLAN-NED
CON-FUSED
WHICH MEANS
SHE SHOULD STILL BE IN THE SAME PLACE AS LAST NIGHT
HERE
PRESS
THE SUSPECT IS TOO WEAK TO GO FAR IF SHE'S HIDING, SHE'LL BE SOME-WHERE EASY TO FIND SHE'S PROBABLY NOT VERY CLEAN.
.....
THAT'S ALL. I WISH YOU LUCK ON YOUR SEARCH

NOW FOR THE DISPATCH ORDER, RURI-KUN.
THANKS!
YEAH.
RIGHT
WE'LL START IMMEDI-ATELY!
roar
Y-YES, SIR! IF YOU SAY SO, SAOTOME-SAN!
BRUSH YOUR TEETH ALREADY, ALL OF YOU!!

I
I CAN'T DO IT NIIYA*
HAVE YOU KILLED YOUR DOG YET!?
HUH!? YOU IDIOT! KILL HIM!! IF YOU DON'T, YOU'LL GET KILLED INSTEAD!
HEY SHIRO!
RO
*or other

THE OLDER BROTHERS WANT TO EAT HIM. GIVE IT UP
YOU FELT SORRY FOR HIM BECAUSE HE WAS HURT.
BUT YOU CAN'T EVEN PROTECT HIM 'TIL THE END
IT'S YOUR FAULT
WHERE WE LIVE ISN'T A GOOD PLACE
DON'T CONCERN YOURSELF WITH ANYONE BUT YOURSELF
GO ON KILL HIM!
HURRY!!
No. . .
No!
I don't want...
BLINK
flinch
A DREAM?

NIIYA DID COME INTO TOWN
BUT COME TO THINK OF IT
OH.
!!!
GOOD MORNING, SHIRO
NI
YA!
GRIN
thud
SCOOOch
rise

IS THERE ANYTHING THAT'S NOT DOWN YOUR ALLEY, NIIYA?
KAHA, COLLECTING INFORMATION IS RIGHT DOWN MY ALLEY, YOU KNOW, SHIRO
H-HOW DID YOU KNOW I WAS HERE ?
YOU MEANT TO KILL ME IF I CAME, DIDN'T YOU?
I'M SURPRISED AT HOW MANY SWORDS YOU MANAGED TO HIDE IN THIS HOUSE
THERE IS LIKE GETTING MY YOUNGER BROTHER TO BEHAVE
TALK ABOUT HEART-LESS
CLANK
IN THE AREA?
I'm not armed!
I JUST DROPPED BY BECAUSE I WAS IN THE AREA!
BUT LET'S NOT GET INTO THAT TODAY, ALL RIGHT?

YOU'VE GOT A NICE PLACE HERE I'M IMPRESSED
I'M NOT SURE IF ANYONE WANTS TO BUY THIS WEIRD STUFF, BUT
I LIKE WHAT YOU MAKE
GRIN
fidget
HEY, CAN YOU DRAW ME SOMETHING?
NOW?
YEAH!
THEN
SLIDE

WHOA!
HEY...
W...
slide
YES
WAIT... YOU'RE DRAWING ON ME!?
HEY, I CAN'T DO THIS!!
IT FEELS WRONG!
HEY!
SHUT UP
I CAN'T CONCEN-TRATE
STOP GETTING SO EXCITED
!!
PINCH

NIIYA'S SO HAPPY THAT YOU'VE GROWN UP TO BE SUCH AN S* BUT WHY DO I FEEL SO EXCITED?
SHUT UP, YOU M*
*sadist/masochist
ALL DONE THERE
I CAN'T SEE THE DESIGN ON MY FACE
GET ME A MIRROR
NO I WON'T
HUH!? YOU BETTER NOT HAVE DRAWN ANYTHING FUNNY!
?
IT'S A PICTURE OF WHAT I WANT TO GIVE YOU, NIIYA.
WHAT?
NOW I'M CURI-OUS.

NOPE. THERE'S A GROUP HERE WHO SENDS MONEY AND LABOUR TO THE OLD MAN
THEY'RE GOING TO GET CAUGHT BY THE POLICE SOON.
THE PLAN IS TO GET RID OF THEM BEFORE THINGS GET COMPLICATED, HAHA!
OH, RIGHT! I CAN'T BE LATE!
DON'T YOU HAVE SOMEWHERE TO GO?
HAVE YOU STARTED WORKING IN THIS TOWN AS WELL?
NIYA, DO YOU STILL SING?
HMM. ONCE IN A WHILE
I LIKE YOUR SINGING
I LIKE YOUR HANDICRAFTS TOO
From when he was a child, he was one who knew.
His childish cruelty hasn't changed. But even so...
WHERE WE LIVE ISN'T A GOOD PLACE

. . may never be able to fly freely

. In the end, Niiya and I...

. I must leave this place soon.

This isn't an appropriate place to get rid of Niiya.

. But regardless, now that he's in this town.

. .Come to think of it.

This might be the first time. .

.

that I've taken interest in anyone besides Niiya.

At first it was only out of curiosity, but now I've involved myself too far.

HM?
UNOCCUPIED
"UNOCCUPIED"?
DID HE MOVE OUT?
I HAVEN'T HEARD ABOUT THIS.
WAIT, THEN.
HE'S LEFT WITHOUT TELLING ANYONE?
CRUNCH
THE GLUE HASN'T DRIED COMPLETELY
HE HASN'T GONE FAR.
天華食堂
drop

WHERE SHALL I GO NEXT ?
Neko
Neko
Help me!
Neko
Neko
DRAG
Neko
Neko

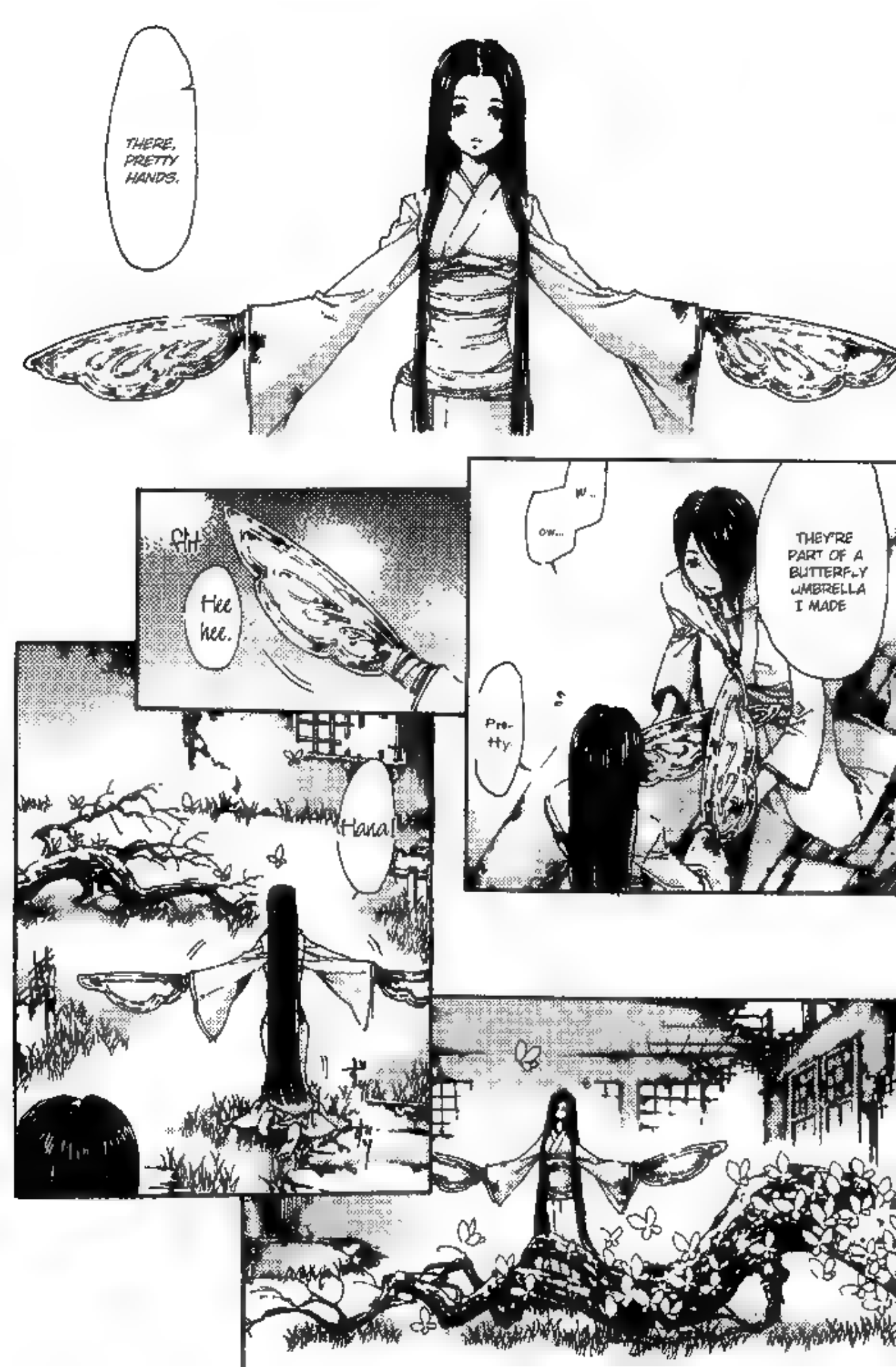
HEY, SAOTOME
WHAT IS THIS "NEKO ONNA"? SOME DEMON?
"NEKO ONNA" !?
HUH!?
BECAUSE HER ARMS AND LEGS HAVE BEEN CUT OFF
TO PUT IT SIMPLY, IT REFERS TO A WOMAN ROBBED OF HER FREEDOM
OH. IT'S A TERM USED AMONG CERTAIN NOTORIOUS HUMAN-TRAFFICKING ORGANI-ZATIONS
STRANGELY ENOUGH, THESE "NEKO ONNA" SELL FOR A LOT AMONG COLLECTORS.
MY GUESS IS. THAT THIS SUSPECT IS A VICTIM WHO'S RUN AWAY FROM THE TRADERS

Help me...
Bang..
chased...
I... 'm... neko onna.
ONE THING WE CAN SAY FOR SURE
IS THAT ONE OF THESE HUMAN-TRAFFICKING GROUPS.
HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS CASE
FOUND YOU.

MAY MOVE FORWARD THANKS TO THIS CASE
THAT INVESTIGATION WE'VE BEEN WORKING ON FOR ALL THESE YEARS.
IT MAY.
COULD THAT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE "HIDDEN KINGDOM"?
THIS IS AN ABANDONED HOUSE
YOU'LL BE ABLE TO HIDE HERE FOR A WHILE
THERE ARE PROBABLY PEOPLE STILL LOOKING FOR YOU
LET'S ASSESS THE SITUATION BEFORE TAKING ACTION

I'll TAKE YOU TO THE POLICE
THEY'LL PROTECT YOU
nod
SINCE YOU'RE A "NEKO ONNA"
YOU'VE RUN AWAY FROM THE PEOPLE TRADERS, YES?
I WON'T GET INVOLVED TOO DEEPLY
IT'S FINE I'M GOING TO GIVE HER TO SOMEONE ELSE SOON
flutter
SHE CAN'T SPEAK PROPERLY
DID SHE SUFFER ABUSE FROM THE TRADERS?
Oh.
BUTTER-FLY
Th
an...
k. you

I was trapped.. since I was young.. so..
Yes like.
YOU LIKE BUTTERFLIES?
Hee hee
A butterfly... free.
Always.. wanted to be like.
Butterfly's hands pretty...
They can fly
fighten
ALTHOUGH I CAN'T GIVE YOU REAL HANDS.
glance


THERE, PRETTY HANDS.
Hee hee.
Hana!
ow...
THEY'RE PART OF A BUTTERFLY UMBRELLA I MADE
Pretty

flutter
fwish
in a hall—
way some—
where . .
. . .
wait, an
image. .
. . .
Ah .
"pretty" . .

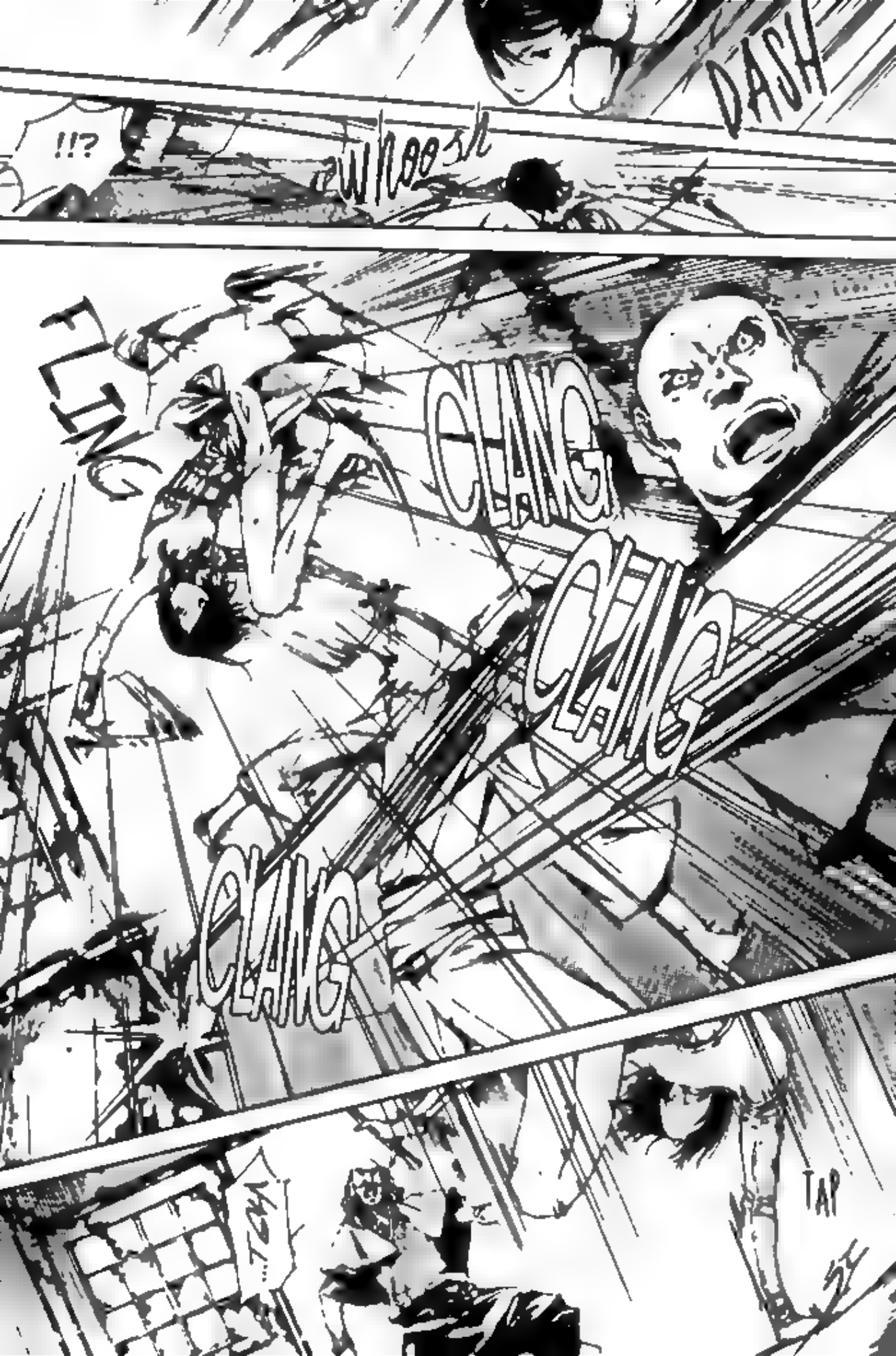
cling
WHAT'S WRONG?
MAKING UMBRE-LLAS.
I LOVE CREATING THINGS
IF ONLY I COULD LIVE SOMEPLACE QUIET
AH. I GUESS IT'S TRUE
W-WAIT!
Pre
tty.
PUSH.
AH!
Prett
y
TH THANK YOU.
y..
ou.
pre-
tty
W-
WAIT!
H-HOW DID THIS. !?

IF I CATCH. . FIVE HUNDRE... D .
I BE- COME .. FREE...
THEY SAID. .
I . FREE
HUH?
...SELL FOR A LOT.
!
YOU... SELL FOR A ... LOT.
HER EYES.
I CAUGHT YOU, MY . PREY.
WHAT .!? WHAT IS SHE .
bang
!?
!!?

crumple
I ONLY GOT HER SHOULDER LET'S TAKE HER AND GET OUTTA HERE THE POLICE ARE CRAWLING AROUND
BETTER NOT HAVE KILLED HER
WE'LL GET RID OF THE OTHER KID
DID YOU GIVE THIS GIRL DRUGS?
NO HARD FEELINGS, BOY
CLICK
WE GOT HER WHEN SHE WAS YOUNG AND MADE HER HELP AROUND BUT SUDDENLY, YOU KNOW
YEAH. IF WE DIDN'T, SHE'D HAVE BEEN USELESS.

HELP?
YOU?
HER JOB WAS TO LURE THE TARGET INTO AN ALLEY-WAY
WE'D CATCH THE TARGET AS SOON AS SHE LED HER IN.
WE PROMISED TO SET HER FREE IF SHE CAUGHT SOO FOR US
WE WERE THINKING OF MAKING HER INTO A NEKO ONNA HERSELF AND SELLING HER OFF
SHE WAS PRETTY USEFUL UNTIL SHE SUDDENLY STARTED REBELLING.
All the time.
People who lived in the back alleys of the world,
and the people who are devoured by them
I remember the world around me was exactly like this.

SEE YA, KID!!
BANG
SWOOSH
I'VE
HAD ENOUGH OF IT ALL.
!?
PING
!?
GRIP
HA-P


!!?
Whoosh
DASH
FLING
CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
TAP

Nuo-o-sh
CLICK
YOU LITTLE...!!
AGH!
CRACK
OFFICER!!
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU, SHIRO-KUN. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT!?
SABUROUTA, HOLD HIM!!
GOT-CHA!
GHH
THUD

HE WAS PROBABLY PROTECTING HIS INFORMATION.
THAT MAN WAS A HUMAN TRAFF-ICKER
HUMAN TRAFF-ICKER!?
WHAT!?
KOJIRO! THE GUY BIT HIS OWN TONGUE AND KILLED HIMSELF!
HE WAS PROBABLY HIDING SOME-THING!
cling
!
I'M SO SORRY !
I LET MY SURPRISE GET THE BETTER OF ME.. !
IF HE HAD SHOT WITH THE INTENTION TO KILL..
OH ! I'M SO SORRY ABOUT JUST NOW.
YOU GOT HURT ON YOUR SHOUL-DER.
!!
MY.. PREY.
I CATCH SOO..
Y. OU..
I.. CAUGHT
PREY..
.MY PREY
HUH?

I..
GOING TO..
BE HAPPY.
HOW MUCH... I..
YOU... DON'T CARE.
ALL... CRY..
YOU DON'T BELONG TO THEM ANYM...
...GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF!
I..
FREE..
BE UN-HAPPY!
I WANT.. HAPPY TOO!
YOU ALL.. DESER-VE...
THEIR.. FAULT!
SER-VE'S RIGHT.
DON'T.. CARE.. ANYONE... ELSE...
I..
BE FREE...
"HOW COULD YOU BETRAY US!? YOU'RE A WOMAN TOO!"
YANK
I WANT! I WANT!
WANT IT!!
WANT IT!!
WANT IT!!
STOP THAT!
CURSE YOU!
I HAVE A SICK CHILD!
YOU MONSTER! CURSE YOU!!

SERVES YOU RIGHT!!
HAHA!
HAHA-HAHA!
"MONSTER!"
HA...
HA-HA...
SHE'S BEEN RUNNING FROM TRADERS. SHE'S NOT HERSELF.
WH... WHAT'S WRONG WITH HER?
LOOK! YOU HAVE HANDS THAT CAN FLY.
YOU'RE FREE NOW.
IF YOU HAVE ANY FEELING OF GUILT, PLEASE, GIVE INFORMATION TO THE POLICE!
YOU MUST ATONE FOR YOUR CRIMES!
YOU MUST DO WHAT YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO.
Hic...
twitch

HUH?
...South District 13th sector sewer level...
AH...
drip
AH...
AHH...!
DASH
KOJIRO, YOU STAY AND KEEP A HOLD OF SHIRO!
THANKS!
I'LL TAKE THIS GIRL TO THE SERGEANT!
LIFT
..YEAH!
INFOR-MATION.
SHIRO-KUN.
..'ES.
I LET A GIRL GET HURT
nudge
YOU LOOK EXHAUSTED ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

!
YOU REALLY PLAN ON GOING OUT IN THIS STATE?
HEY
YOU LOOK PALE
I CAN'T PROTECT ANYONE LIKE THIS
THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU, OFFICER.
I DON'T THINK IT'S A GOOD IDEA.
YES. THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HELP
I CAN TELL YOU'RE HURTING.
I CAN'T LET YOU GO ALONE WHEN YOU'RE LIKE THIS.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S DRIVING YOU TO DO THIS, BUT

AND I KNOW FROM MY JOB THAT PEOPLE WITH POWERS LIKE YOURS ARE PRONE TO LONELINESS!
A FRIEND OF A FEW MONTHS IS STILL A FRIEND!
..YOU'VE ONLY KNOWN ME FOR A FEW MONTHS. WHY DO YOU CARE ABOUT ME SO MUCH?
YOUR HELP IS JUST A NUISANCE!
...NO. I DON'T COME FROM A DECENT BACKGROUND IN THE FIRST PLACE.
LET ME HELP YOU.
YOU'LL END UP GOING IN A BAD DIRECTION IF YOU GO ALONE.
UGH
grab
I'M MORE SELFISH THAN I LOOK.
I SEE THEN I'LL USE FORCE TO MAKE YOU STAY
...!
!!
CRACK

ARE YOU SAYING ALL THE PEOPLE YOU'VE MET...
THEN ARE YOU SAYING THAT YOU SHOULD HAVE NEVER GOTTEN INVOLVED WITH ME!?

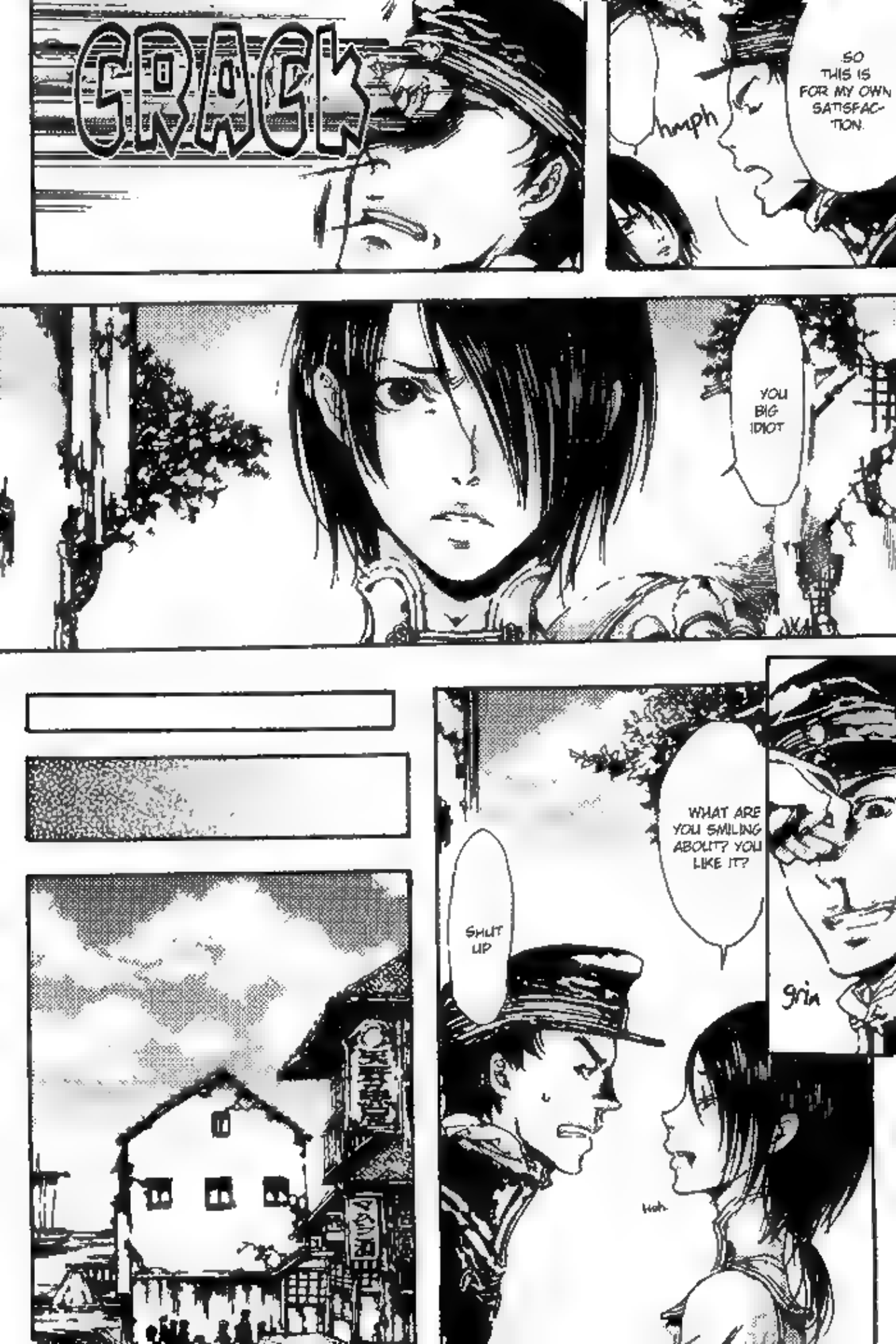
GETTING INVOLVED WITH ME ISN'T GOING TO DO ANY GOOD!
YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME!

NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS IN THE FUTURE, I'LL NEVER REGRET THE FACT THAT I MET YOU!
I WILL!

DIDN'T GAIN A SINGLE THING FROM YOU?
CAN YOU REALLY SAY IT WAS ALL A WASTE OF TIME?

NOTHING I DO WILL EXCUSE THAT FACT!
YOU DON'T CARE IF YOU MAKE AGURI-DONO OR ARAGAMI-DONO CRY!?
IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO YOU, OFFICER...!

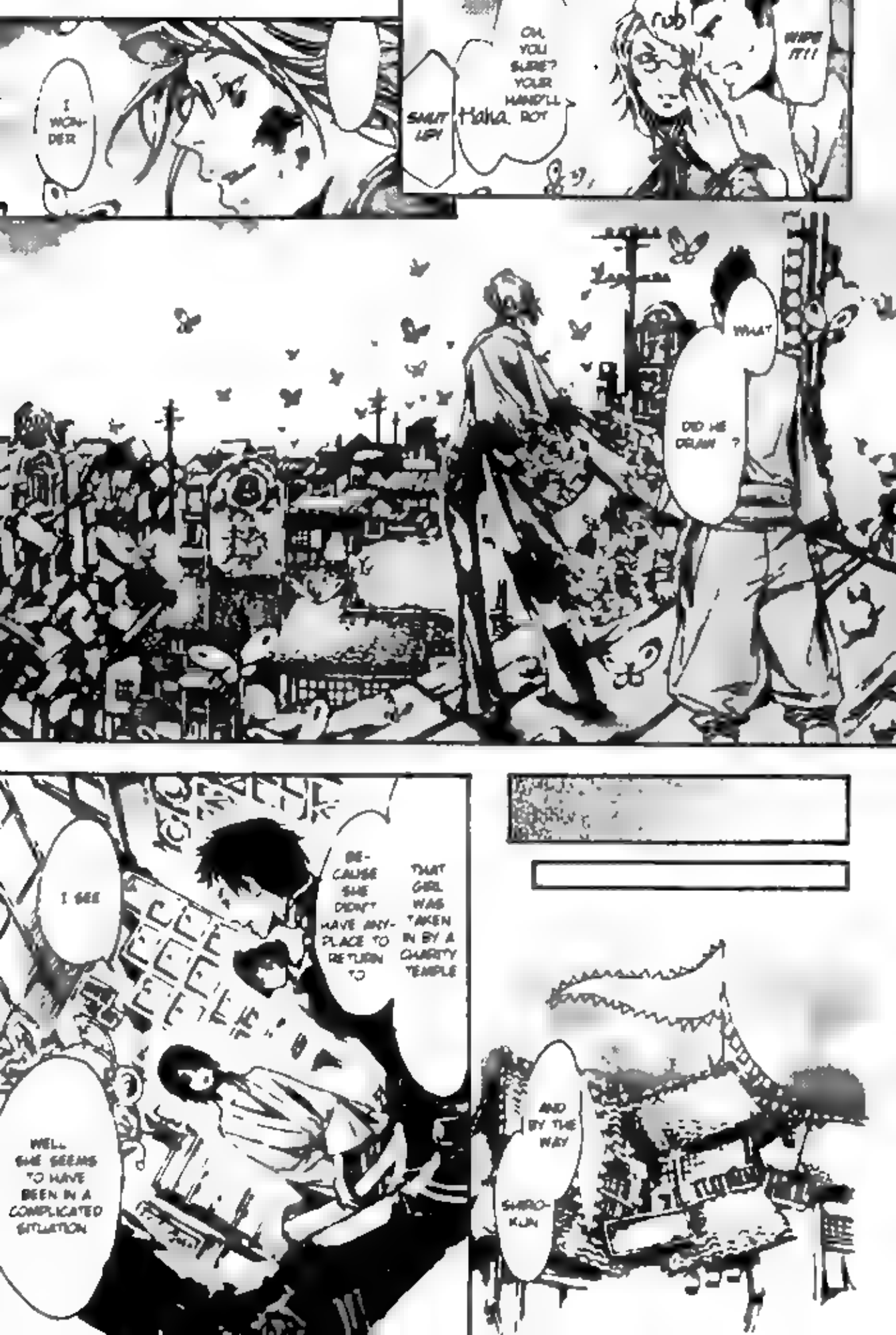
... AND ...
EVERYONE HAS ISSUES. I WON'T FORCE YOU TO DIVULGE ANY INFORMATION!
AND THERE ARE THINGS I CAN'T TELL YOU ABOUT MYSELF, OFFICER.
AGURI AND SABUROUTA WILL UNDERSTAND!
NO MATTER WHAT, I WON'T REGRET IT!
IF IT'S A DECISION I'VE MADE OF MY OWN WILL,
I KNOW I'LL REGRET IT!
BUT IF I LET YOU GO NOW...
I CAN'T BEAR TO DO THAT.


CRACK
SO THIS IS FOR MY OWN SATISFAC-TION.
humph
YOU BIG IDIOT
WHAT ARE YOU SMILING ABOUT? YOU LIKE IT?
SHUT UP
grin
huh

creak
CARE-FUL!
WHOA!
HEY, THE DOOR IS OPEN!
WE CAN GET IN.
LOOKS LIKE JUST A WARE-HOUSE
THIS IS IT, THE SOUTH DISTRICT 13TH SECTOR
A HEAP OF BODIES... WHAT HAPP-ENED...!?
DAMN... WE CAN'T GET ANY EVIDENCE FROM DEAD BODIES!
I GUESS THEY GOT THE BETTER OF US.
TRAFFIC-KERS!?
IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A HIDEOUT FOR THE HUMAN TRAFFICKERS BUT I GUESS SOMEONE ELSE GOT HERE FIRST

We did, we did!
Good job. Run kun! Haha!
Squeeeal
We did it, Saotome!! It didn't help our investigation... but this is a huge deal!!
Haha!
TRAFFICKERS ARE LIKE BULLIES
THEY'RE WEAK NO MATTER THEIR NUMBER.
WE JUST KILLED ALL THOSE PEOPLE
HEY, ANRI. YOU'RE NOT TIRED?
OH, THIS?
WHAT'S THAT, A TATTOO?
HUH!? POISON!? TAKE IT OFF!!
POISONOUS FACE PAINT

SHIRO DREW IT
WHY?
OH, HEY CAN YOU SEE WHAT'S ON MY FACE?
YUP BRATTY AS ALWAYS HE'S WITH AN INTERESTING OFFICER NOW
...SHIRO!? YOU FOUND HIM!?
SHIRO SAID HE WANTED TO GIVE ME THIS.
ALL I SEE IS YOUR DISCOLOURED SKIN FROM THE POISON
I CAN'T SEE IT
YOU'VE GOT THEIR BLOOD ON YOUR FACE.
ALL RIGHT, NOW CAN YOU PLEASE TAKE IT OFF!?
THAT'S NO FUN
GEEZ.


I WONDER
SHUT UP!
OH, YOU SURE? YOUR HAND'LL ROT
Haha
rub
WIPE IT!!!
WHAT
DID HE DRAW ?
I SEE
BECAUSE SHE DIDN'T HAVE ANYPLACE TO RETURN TO
THAT GIRL WAS TAKEN IN BY A CHARITY TEMPLE
WELL SHE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN IN A COMPLICATED SITUATION
AND BY THE WAY
SHIRO-KUN

SHE MUST HAVE FELT REGRET AT COMPROMISING WITH THE TRAFFICKERS TO PROTECT HERSELF
AS A VICTIM HERSELF,
BUT EVEN IN HER MADNESS, SHE WAS able TO TELL US WHERE THE VICTIMS WERE BEING KEPT
lean
YOU DID MAKE ME WORRY, AND FOR THAT YOU'LL PAY THE PENALTY
HOW-EVER
HUH?
OH NO, I
YOU DID A GOOD JOB BY TAKING HER IN, SHIRO
THANKS TO HER, ALL THE OTHER VICTIMS WERE RESCUED.
'KAY
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO REFUSE
hehehehe
HUH!?
CLOSE YOUR EYES AND OPEN YOUR MOUTH
ahh

shove
N...
WHAT IS THIS!?
struggle
WHAT!? WH...!? N...
CRAM
struggle
JUST PUT IT IN YOUR MOUTH!
!!
Push
!?
Pfffffff!
black
STOP THAT!!
WHO KNOWS?
WH-WHAT IS THIS!? IT'S GOING TO COME OFF, RIGHT!?
HOW'RE YOU GONNA PLAY THOSE GAMES WITH YOUR WOMEN NOW, HUH?
teehee
teehee
FLINCH
glance
!!!!

shock !!!!
Hahaha! SHIRO-SAMA, YOUR TEETH ARE STRANGE!!
A-AGURI-DONO, IT'S NOTHING!!
WHAT KIND OF GAMES DO YOU PLAY WITH WOMEN?
drip
drip
hug
WE WERE REALLY WORRIED!
HEY, KOJIRO
BUT I'M GLAD YOU DECIDED TO STAY!
HAHA, SORRY ABOUT THAT SHIRO-KUN IT'LL COME OFF JUST FINE.
flash
IS THAT GUY WEARING ANY UNDER-WEAR?
NG*
*no good

I DIDN'T KNOW SHIRO HAD SO MANY FACIAL EXPRESSIONS
HM
ARREST THIS GUY!!
PEOPLE LIKE THAT ARE CALLED PERVERTS, DID YOU KNOW THAT!?
I DON'T LIKE UNDERWEAR OR CLOTHES, FOR THAT MATTER
HOW CAN SOMEONE WITH A DELICATE FACE LIKE YOURS HAVE SUCH AN INDECENT CROTCH, HUH!? CAN YOU EXPLAIN THAT TO ME, KID!?
TO HAVE BEEN ABLE TO HOLD SHIRO BACK
HE'S INTERESTING TOO
AND THAT MAN,
Hahaha!
I WISH I COULD EAT HIM UP
HE'S A GOOD MAN
BUT I WANT TO WORK
CAREFUL! DON'T OVERWORK YOURSELF
pitter patter
THIS IS GONNA GET EXCITING

BUT HER MEMORY ISN'T VERY CLEAR SHE MUST HAVE HAD A TROUBLED PAST
AND SHE'S SO ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT CHARITY WORK
THE EFFECTS OF THE DRUGS SEEM TO HAVE WORN OFF QUITE A BIT
MY, HOW PRETTY
A BUTTERFLY
I HAVE A FEELING I RECEIVED SOMETHING PRECIOUS.
FROM SOMEONE BEFORE
I.
I'M GLAD
TO HAVE MET HIM
END

Thank you for reading! Here starts the omake manga ...

... Nao Tsukiji

WROUGHT CANDY?
'ES. LIKE THIS FLOWER-SHAPED ONE THAT I JUST BOUGHT
YOU LIKE THOSE KINDS OF THINGS, DON'T YOU?
DO YOU LIKE ANYTHING ESPECIALLY OFFICER?
LET'S SEE
CATS. I GUESS
HUH?

BUT FOR SOME REASON, THEY HATE ME
HISSSS!
Ouch!
WHY ARE PEOPLE SO EMBARRASSING AROUND SMALL ANIMALS. ?
gulp
C'MERE? KUROBE? MIKEMARO?
HAHA, SERVES YOU RIGHT!
I DIDN'T GET TO BEFRIEND THEM AGAIN.
Thirty minutes later
sniffle
THAT MAKES YOU MORE EMBARR-ASSING, OFFICER
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
BUT DON'T YOU THINK THAT MAKES THEM CUTER!?
...
tremble
!!!
MEOW
rub rub
GASP!
MEOW
PIT
FREEZE
Purr

tap tap
RUSTLE
...
Meow.
candy
I-I DON'T NEED YOUR PITY!
...OKAY. FINE.
BROTHER, WHERE DID THIS CANDY COME FROM?
Y-YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO EAT IT!
It may be candy, but it's still a cat!
Kept it anyway, and decided to display it
the end

Hello, and let me introduce myself. I'm Nao Tsukiji. Thank you for reading this book! I hope you enjoyed it.

This was my first published volume, so the whole time I felt like the Titanic being tossed around in waves of nervousness and joy.

At first, when I was nominated for the Wings Manga Award, the manager I was working with said, "Let's start working on your next manga. Preferably something with a different content and feel from the manga you submitted," and in the end, what I had was the first chapter of this manga.

Since my first work was a romantic comedy full of frilly dresses and girls, I aimed for something completely different this time around. But as a result I think I was a little too liberal, and I was afraid that I'd gone too far. I was nervous when it was set to serialize, and when I was told I could continue writing it, it felt like a miracle. I can't be thankful enough.

When I started writing this, one thing I made sure to do was to carry out everything that I had set out to do. No matter how crazy, I told myself I'd pull it off, and I did have fun in the process, but there were still some places that needed improvement... ugh... I do want to improve...! I would like to continue being able to draw the various faces and expressions of the main characters.

To wrap up, from the bottom of my heart, I'd like to thank all my readers, people who sent words of encouragement to Kojiro and Shiro (you are my source of energy!), and my manager, who also came up with the new title for this manga, my friends who have always supported me, and all the people that have come together to make this book possible.

It has always been my dream to see a manga that I've written being released.

I cannot thank you all enough.

2008 September
Nao Tsukiji

Happy
Halloween

NAKAMA

:unlocked: